

12-2007

Information Outlook, December 2007

Special Libraries Association

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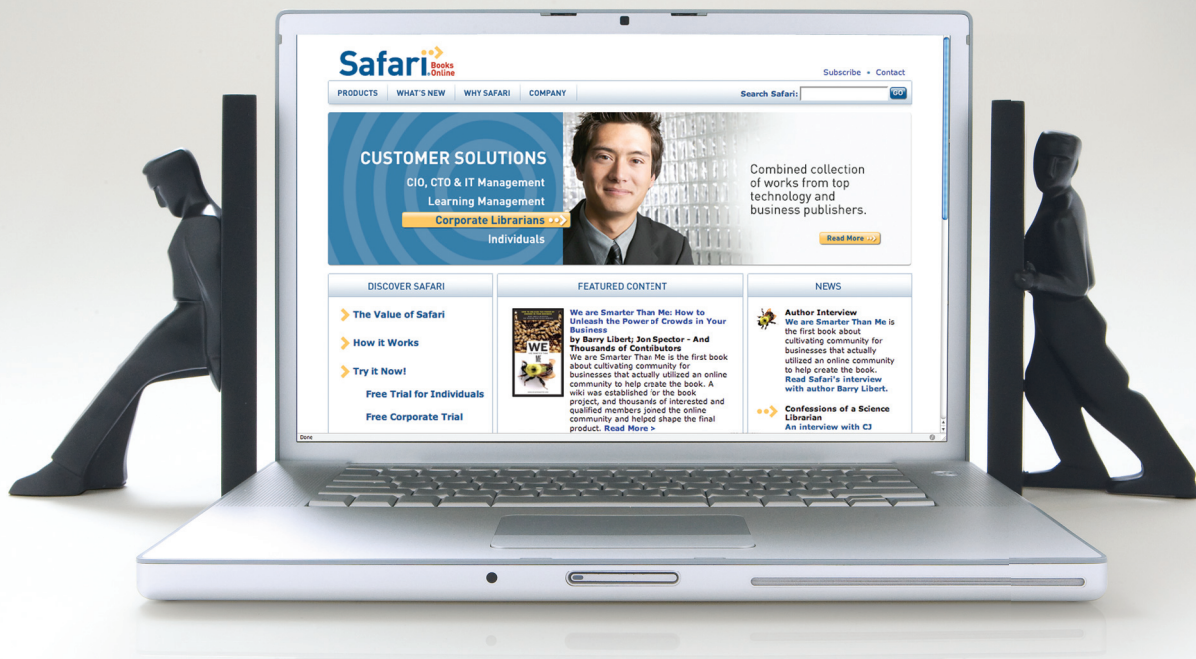
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THE MAGAZINE OF THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION



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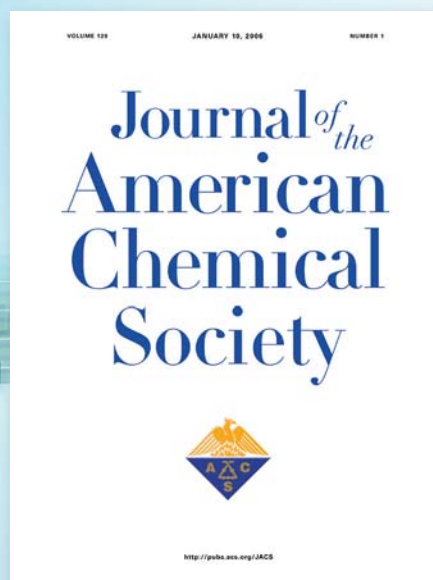
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2007 Saw Some Major Changes For Information Professionals

Credentials, competencies, and experience are good starting points, but you'll need more in a shifting environment.

BY JANICE R. LACHANCE, SLA CEO



As 2007 rapidly comes to an end, one word continues to dominate the lexicon of the information profession. That word is “change.” We continue to witness mega-mergers among giants of the publishing and information industries and dramatic, if not revolutionary, changes in the business models of many venerable content providers. These changes are driven, in large measure, by the continuing evolution and reach of innovative uses of technology, such as those that define Web 2.0. At the center of this maelstrom are librarians and information professionals who are asked continually to adapt to changes in the marketplace at extraordinary speed as their organizations seek to redefine themselves in what is a less well-defined world.

In today's professional environment, librarians and info pros are not only called upon to retrieve, manage, and disseminate large amounts of often highly technical information, they also are expected to understand the latest advancements in technology, such as social networking, and to apply these innovations for the strategic benefit of their organizations. No small challenge.

When I speak at chapters and conferences throughout the world, I often ask members, “Who understands better than you the information needs of your organization? And, who is better qualified than an info pro to explain to a CEO or other senior management the advantages of one knowledge delivery system over another?” The answer is “No one.” As a result, I believe librarians and info pros have a unique opportunity to enhance, or even ignite,

their careers and to become indispensable to their organizations.

What will it take to achieve this level of influence? Unquestionably, you will have to possess solid professional credentials, competencies, and experience. More than that, you will have to look at your roles differently and be willing to step out of your comfort zone.

It has been said that the only thing you can expect from change is more change. That means, in today's hyper-competitive business environment, you may have to look at yourself and your profession differently at times. Sometimes only a small change in perspective will be necessary. Other times, more may be required of you. You may even have to reinvent yourself completely from time to time. Whatever is demanded, you have the greatest chance of success by being adaptable and flexible to the change swirling about you.

So how do you do this? I believe there are three factors for success in an uncertain and changing environment. These are a willingness to take risk, an appreciation for the value of continued learning, and the ability to think strategically.

When I speak of risk, I mean calculated risk intended to achieve a specific objective. While I know it is not in the nature of most librarians and info pros to be self-promoters, you must learn to be. No matter what industry you work in today, you must find a way to ensure that you are acknowledged by senior management for the contributions you make, especially to high-profile successes such as landing

an important account or reducing your organization's exposure to costly litigation, and you must continually make the case for your value.

Another way you can achieve flexibility during your career is through continued learning and professional development. By continuously expanding your skills and honing your knowledge, you put yourself in the best position possible to take advantage of unexpected opportunities.

While a fair amount of information concerning technology is available on the job, librarians and info pros must continuously seek out new ways to increase their level of knowledge. This is true in all facets of your career. It is why SLA has made a significant commitment to the continued development of professional education through Click University. Click U provides a wide variety of professional learning opportunities. You can preview Click U's numerous offerings by visiting the SLA Web site and clicking Professional Development. I cannot encourage you enough to keep your knowledge and skills as sharp as they can possibly be.

Finally, I urge you to adopt the strategic mindset of a senior executive. This allows you to focus on your organization's “big picture.” To do that, you must have a broad, comprehensive understanding of the organization's current operating position today and a clear, unobstructed view of its goals and objectives for tomorrow.

To gain this kind of broad perspective, I encourage you to forge alliances or partnerships inside your organization with those who are leaders or natural allies. This will not only help you understand more clearly the priorities of the enterprise, it will help reinforce perceptions of your value to the organization.

There are no sure-fire formulas for dealing with change. It can be unsettling and it can be difficult. If, however, you give yourself every edge and make the most of every opportunity that presents itself, you will not only succeed, you will flourish. **SLA**

Copyright Clearance Center Adds Blogs to Licensing Programs

Updates on the information professional and SLA.

Copyright Clearance Center has expanded its licensing services to include rights to more than 1,000 popular blogs.

CCC is making rights to blog content available through an agreement with Newstex, a news and information aggregator. Newstex delivers real-time news and commentary from thousands of newswires, newspapers, magazines, financial and business sources, official government feeds, and blogs.

The addition of blogs, including hundreds that focus on business, technology, finance, healthcare, the law, and other topics, makes them available for CCC clients to share within their enterprises. For others uses, including academic uses, rights can be secured via CCC's pay-per-use services on an as-needed basis. For bloggers, the new licensing capability increases the potential of realizing royalty income for the use of their work. **SLA**

South Atlantic Meeting Set for February 27-29

The SLA South Atlantic Regional Conference—"The Surreal Landscape: Information Professionals Mastering the Challenges of Time and Space"—will be held in St. Petersburg, Florida, February 27-29, 2008.

Keynote speakers are SLA President-elect Steven Abram and Gram Farmelo, senior research fellow at the Science Museum in London. Farmelo is an international consultant in the public dimensions of science

and is author of a forthcoming book on noted scholar and Nobel Prize winner, Paul Dirac.

For registration, additional program, or vendor information, see units.sla.org/regconf/sarc4/index.html. **SLA**

Obituaries

Lois Godfrey

Lois Godfrey, one of the Rio Grande Chapter's founding members and president in its third year, died November 26.

Born in March 1928, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, she died in Boulder, Colorado, after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease.

Ms. Godfrey attended the University of Michigan, and graduated from Simmons College, Boston, with a degree in library science. She married Tom Godfrey in 1950, and they moved to Los Alamos, New Mexico, in 1954, where their daughter was born in 1955. She worked at the LANL library until her retirement, and co-authored the Dictionary of Report Series Codes, two editions.

She is survived by her husband, Tom, and their daughter, Janet Elizabeth.

Besides SLA, she was a volunteer with the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos, and Trinity-on-the-Hill Episcopal Church.

Gloria Zamora, a long-time leader of the Los Alamos Chapter recently elected SLA president-elect for 2008,

said, "Lois was an inspiration to many in our chapter, the association and New Mexico's library community. I still remember feeling a little intimidated by her when I first started my career in New Mexico, but later learned that she was a warm and caring individual. I believe I tried to follow in her footsteps where our chapter was concerned. She will be greatly missed by our community." **SLA**

Dorothy Kasman

Dorothy Kasman, retired corporate librarian, died October 31 at the Mayflower Nursing Home in West Yarmouth, Massachusetts. She was 89 years old.

She was an honored member of SLA, serving on several committees over the years. She received the Distinguished Member Award in 1988 and was inducted into the SLA Hall of Fame in 1991. She was a past chair of the Business and Finance Division and a past treasurer for the organization.

A native of Trenton, she earned a bachelor of arts degree from Douglass College (now part of Rutgers University) in 1941 and an MLIS 1957. She received an MBA from New York University in 1970.

From 1956 to 1958, she was the librarian at the Textile Research Institute, in Princeton, N.J. She moved to New York City in 1958, joining Coopers & Lybrand (now PricewaterhouseCoopers), as chief librarian, a position she held for more than 30 years.

Ms. Kasman is survived by nieces and nephews. **SLA**



2007 SLA Salary Survey Includes Data from Europe

For the first time, the *SLA Salary Survey and Workplace Study* contains salary information and other data from respondents in Europe, including the U.K.

According to the 2007 survey results, the average salary increases for SLA members in the U.S. and Canada have outpaced inflation yet again. Based on salaries as of April 2007, for U.S.-based respondents the increase in salaries for 2007 over 2006 was 5.1 percent. This is 1.1 percent higher than the increase from 2005 to 2006. The average salary for U.S. members who answered the survey was US\$ 69,446, compared with US\$ 67,400 reported in 2006.

The average for Canadian members was CAN\$ 67,171 compared with CAN\$ 65,522 in 2006. Salaries for Canadian members were 4.9 percent higher on 1 April 2007 than a year earlier, while the CPI had increased just 2 percent in the same period.

The European data is separated into two categories: responses from U.K. and other European SLA members. The average salary for U.K. respondents was £48,185, with a reported increase of 7.9 percent over the previous year. For other European members, the average salary was €57,246, an increase of 6.8 percent from 2006.

All four sets of data—U.S., Canada, U.K., other European countries—are reported in the local currency in the published report; however, here is a comparison of mean salaries converted into U.S. dollars at the 1 April 2007 exchange rates: U.K., \$94,480; other European countries, \$76,328, U.S., \$69,446; Canada, \$58,410.

SLA Salary Calculator

The SLA salary calculator is an online interactive tool to analyze salaries based on multiple characteristics, rather than the two-dimensional format in the print version of the report. The tool is available to purchasers of the report. The

salary calculator only includes data for Canada and the U.S.

Workplace Study

A workplace study based on an additional survey sent to U.S. and Canadian members' human resource departments is published with the salary survey results. Highlights and trends:

Outsourcing. The outsourcing of information functions has evened or stabilized at just under 20 percent of responding companies. In 2007, 18.8 percent of all respondents had outsourced or had considered it, versus 21.6 percent in 2006 and 15.2 in 2005. Only 21.7 percent of the organizations that have outsourced reported a reduction in library/information center staff, a little lower than 2006 and 2005. Of the larger companies (more than 2000 employees) that had outsourced, 28.6 percent reported staff reduction, also much lower than reported the previous year.

Budgets. Forty percent of the respondents indicated that their library/information center budget was set to increase. Just over half (52.9 percent) of all respondents expect an increase in the size of their organization's staff in 2008, but only one-fifth (21.5 percent) anticipated an increase in their library/information center staff.

Competencies. Job descriptions or skill sets required for information professionals have changed at 71.4 percent of the responding organizations over the past five years. More than 80 percent of those reporting a change identified three skills sets as "very important" or "important": knowledge management (84.4 percent), database management (82.9 percent), and Web content management (81.8 percent).

The *2007 SLA Salary Survey and Workplace Study* are now available for purchase from the SLA Store online at www.sla.org/merchandise. **SLA**

Info File

Writing for Information Outlook

Information Outlook welcomes queries from authors about articles of interest to information professionals. For writer's guidelines and a current editorial calendar, see www.sla.org/content/Shop/Information/writingforio/index.cfm or write to editor@sla.org. Please allow six to eight weeks for acceptance.

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Not for Web Tourist Listings: Okay, Tourists Can Look, Too

And *Working Mother* magazine lists companies that are making their own environmental impact statements.

BY CAROLYN J. SOSNOWSKI, MLIS

NFT: Not for Tourists

www.notfortourists.com

Although you could buy a print edition of one of these travel guides, you'll probably be able to find what you need right here on the Web site...especially since you can view and print the whole book from your computer. Of course, we encourage you to be green and copyright-friendly and download just what you need...a map, restaurant descriptions, information about a landmark attraction. And, it's good to know where to find a gas station, a supermarket, and a bank...even if you *are* just visiting. Subscribe to the "On Our Radar" feed to keep up with the latest



discoveries. The best news of all: there is now a guide for Seattle, so you can plan your time in the city for the 2008

Annual Conference.

2007 Best Green Companies

www.workingmother.com/web?service=vpage/1131

There have been a lot of stories in the media about going green; here's a resource from *Working Mother*. These



20 companies have been recognized for their efforts to run their businesses in a more eco-friendly way (telecommuting employees, renewable energy certificates for customers, financial support of green projects and community development). If you want to support these initiatives, use this list to guide your purchasing. However, you can also follow the examples these companies are setting to inspire green practices in your own organization.

PC Magazine: Our 100 Favorite Blogs

www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2704,2192058,00.asp

When was the last time you added a blog to your reading list? If inertia has set in, you'll want to peruse this list, compiled by *PC Magazine* staffers, for new ideas and perspectives.



You've heard of the Drudge Report, and probably *Ars Technica*, but how about these? The Consumerist will help you be a savvy shopper. Techie? Try Coolest Gadgets. Lifehacker offers tips for getting organized. Science Blog brings you study results and news. There's even a blog devoted to cupcakes. (Yes.) Plus, a comprehensive list of blogs from *PC Magazine* itself.

The "Blog" of "Unnecessary" Quotation Marks et al.

As a sometime writer and editor, I found this blog quite amusing (<http://quotation-marks.blogspot.com>). On occasion, I find myself taken aback at bad grammar, incorrect word usage, and punctuation misuse on menus, on signs (.99¢, anyone?), and in books and newspapers. Now I know I'm not alone. You can chuckle through this blog, then head over to Apostrophe Abuse (www.apostropheabuse.com) for further entertainment. On the positive side of things, Grammar Girl's (<http://grammar.quick-anddirtytips.com>) podcasts will put you on the path to proper usage...we could all learn something here. **SLA**

CAROLYN J. SOSNOWSKI, MLIS, is SLA's information specialist. She has 10 years of experience in libraries, including more than four years in SLA's Information Center. She can be reached at csosnowski@sla.org.





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Is Evidence-Based Management Right for You ●

CHANCES ARE IT WILL HELP YOUR ORGANIZATION—
IF YOU HAVE THE TIME TO IMPLEMENT IT.

BY BILL FISHER AND DAV ROBERTSON

Decisions, decisions—we make countless decisions every day, and for most of us having some basis for a given decision is a good thing. The idea behind evidence-based practice is to help us establish that basis for making a decision.

While a number of fields are using some type of evidence-based practice, including criminology, education, social work, and software engineering, the concept got its start in the medical and health-related fields some 15 years ago. So our colleagues from the Biomedical and Life Sciences and Pharmaceutical and Health Technology divisions may be more familiar with evidence-based practice than the rest of us. This is also the case with our colleagues who are members of the Medical Library Association, as well as information professionals in Great Britain, Australia,

and Canada, where evidence-based practice has made greater inroads into library and information practice than in the United States.

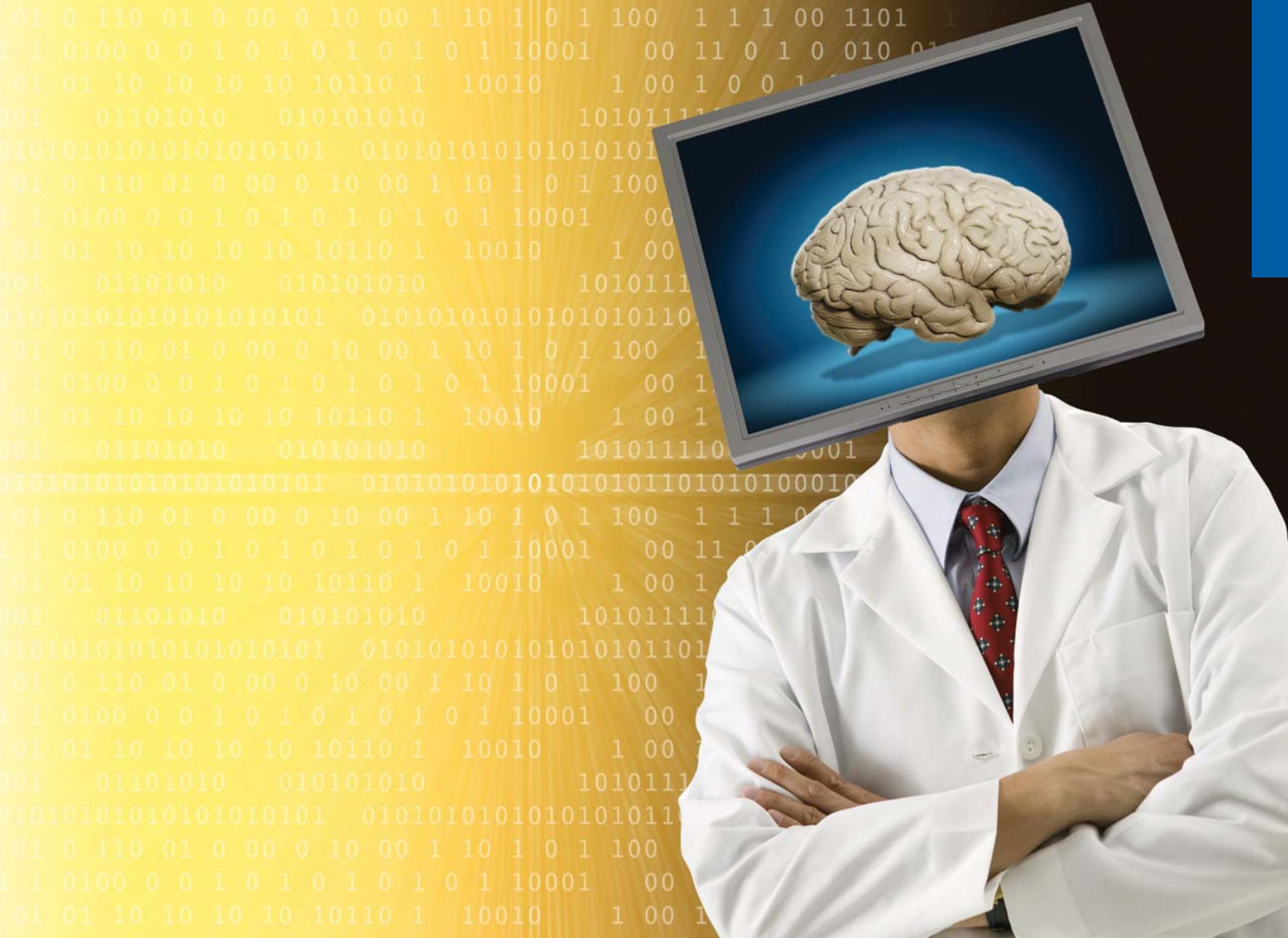
The evidence-based umbrella that most special libraries fall under to one degree or another is evidence-based *management*. Even if we're making a decision that involves the delivery of a specific service or program to our customers, we'll make that decision from a managerial perspective. The idea behind evidence-based management (and all evidence-based practice for that matter) is to use the best available evidence to support our decisions, moving away from guesswork, habit, personal bias, sacred cows, or the most recent fad touted in the management literature.

The most ardent proponents of evidence-based management are two professors from Stanford's business school, Jeffrey Pfeffer and Robert Sutton. In their book, *Hard Facts, Dangerous Half-*

Truths and Total Nonsense, as well as recent articles in *Harvard Business Review* and *California Management Review*, Pfeffer and Sutton explain what is needed for an organization to adopt an evidence-based approach.

According to Pfeffer and Sutton, evidence-based management requires a change in attitude, a change in how a manager thinks about decision-making. So for many organizations, creating a culture for evidence-based management to be accepted is the major challenge. Three typical management practices—casual benchmarking, doing what —are questioned by Pfeffer and Sutton. They propose six standards for managers to consider under an evidence-based management approach:

- Treat old ideas like old ideas.
- Be suspicious of breakthrough ideas and studies—they almost never happen.
- Celebrate communities of smart peo-



ple and collective brilliance, not lone geniuses or gurus.

- Emphasize the virtues *and* drawbacks (and uncertainties) of your research and proposed practices.
- Use success and failure stories to illustrate practices supported by other evidence, not necessarily as valid evidence.
- Take a neutral approach to ideologies and theories. Base management practices on the best evidence, not what is in vogue.

Denise Rousseau, while she was president of the Academy of Management in 2005, also championed the benefits of evidence-based management, indicating that it leads to higher-quality managerial decisions that are better implemented and yields outcomes more in line with organizational goals. Rousseau feels that those who use evidence and learn to use it well have comparative advantage over

their less competent counterparts.

As an educator, she feels that “a focus on evidence use may also ultimately help to blur the boundaries between researchers, educators, and managers, creating a lively community with many feedback loops where information is systematically gathered, evaluated, disseminated, implemented, reevaluated, and shared.”

Special Libraries and Evidence-Based Management

From an organizational perspective, it would be beneficial for special librarians to apply the principles of evidence-based management to their work environments for a number of reasons.

First, since most special libraries are particularly vulnerable to reductions, downsizing, or even closure, demonstrating that your decision-making is supported by evidence can only help to substantiate the business-like nature of

your operation. Remember, most of the environments where special libraries are found don't have to support those libraries, so presenting an evidence-based focus can help minimize questions of the library's value to the organization.

Second, adopting an evidence-based approach may be necessary if the parent organization uses evidence-based management or even if the librarian's manager is a proponent of evidence-based management. It is not surprising at all that medical and other health-related libraries have taken the lead with evidence-based applications in a library environment since the medical/health care field is far ahead of other disciplines in applying evidence-based practices.

Third, the only thing most special librarians have in excess is work to do, so being able to identify and eliminate functions that don't really help one accomplish anything is extremely useful. As a profession there are numerous things

any library does because it is a library, but do all those really need to be done in every library in every organization?

However, a search for examples of evidence-based management in the special library environment outside of medical libraries does not yield much that is promising. Only two relevant papers about using evidence-based management in special libraries were discovered: One dealt with the use of information in decision-making in the banking industry in the UK, and the other was a meta-analysis of studies on the use of information in decision-making in six different environments in the UK that were compared with one study from Canada and two from the United States. Both of these studies are from 1998.

This simply reinforces comments by a number of authors who have looked at the use of evidence-based practice in librarianship regarding our lack of an evidence base upon which to use an evidence-based approach.

Obstacles for Special Libraries

For special librarians, a couple of the other factors usually identified as inhibitors to evidence-based practice ring true. One of these is the lack of time many special librarians face due to staff size; there are too many things that need to be done for the staff available to do them. The irony here is the special librarian may not have the time to find evidence to help manage the library because he or she is busy finding evidence for others in the organization to assist them in managing their operation.

Another factor, again very prevalent among special librarians, is an empha-

sis on practical rather than theoretical knowledge. The gap between the results of many research studies and the information that practitioners say will be useful to them has been noted in both management and librarianship. This may be a result of staff size and workload, leading special librarians to look for ideas they can implement quickly and easily, often without taking the time to evaluate just how effective the new idea might be.

Finally, there is the idea that we don't have the skills to critically appraise the evidence we find. Again, even those special librarians who have the ability to analyze and evaluate the research they can access probably don't have the time to do so. For those who may not have these skills (or have not used them recently), they can be learned/relearned without a lot of difficulty, however, one does need to have the time.

We should point out that these obstacles are faced by librarians in many environments, not just in special libraries.

A study done in New Zealand found that special librarians in government agencies were less likely than their academic counterparts to use research. Additionally, it was found that the smaller the library staff size, the less likely the librarians were to use research. Presumably, these smaller libraries were special, governmental libraries.

It was also found that attending conferences correlated with increased research use. Even if you don't have an opportunity to keep up with the published literature discussing the results of various research studies, attending a professional conference will provide

some access to this kind of information.

For example, an examination of the program from the recently concluded 2007 SLA annual conference identifies several such opportunities. Of particular relevance are the contributed papers sessions, which focused on customer service issues, innovative uses of technology, and management issues. (To see the contributed papers online, go to www.sla.org/content/Events/conference/ac2007/conference/papers.cfm.) The New Zealand study found that the second most-cited reason information professionals consult research, after personal professional development, dealt with managerial activities, including problem solving, decision-making, planning, or evaluation—so there may be opportunities for evidence-based management after all.

Strategies for Implementation

Even with these hurdles to surmount, we believe that most special librarians would benefit from adopting some form of evidence-based management. Let's see what that might look like.

Since the medical and healthcare fields have led the way in evidence-based practice, let's look at three groups of strategies recommended for applying evidence-based management in the field of nursing for relevance to the field of librarianship. In a paper on evidence-based management for nurse executives, Lauren Williams puts forth three groupings of strategies: strategies to establish an evidence-based management culture, to create the capacity to change to evidence-based management, and to sustain that change.

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DAVENPORT "DAV" ROBERTSON is chief, Library and Information Services Branch, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, where he recently refocused information services based on evidence obtained from a strategic needs assessment. He has managed special libraries for 32 years and he has served on the SLA Board of Directors and in other positions in SLA. A Fellow of SLA, he chairs the SLA Centennial Commission.

Since most special libraries are vulnerable to reductions, downsizing, or even closure, demonstrating that decision-making is supported by evidence can only help to substantiate the business-like nature of the operation.

The first group of strategies focuses on establishing an organizational culture where evidence-based management can flourish. Most of the recommendations in the first group have to do with making it clear that the leaders of an organization—large or small—support evidence-based management and actively encourage it. The second group of strategies then deals with creating the capacity to change to evidence-based management, and the recommendations with this group spell out some ways—such as management research forums and leadership development programs—to integrate evidence-based management into practice. The final group of strategies looks at sustaining the changes that are made. This group of recommendations includes some specific ways—such as including evidence-based management in performance plans—to ensure that evidence-based management practices will continue. This group also echoes recommendations from other evidence-based management proponents to establish collaborative partnerships between practitioners and the academic community and to create an evidence-based management collaborative database.

While strategies are relevant to the practice of evidence-based management in any field, they are of particular interest to special libraries. In 2001, Joanne Gard Marshall and SLA's Research Committee put forth a prescription for applying evidence-based practice in special libraries. The committee's recommendations are similar to the strategies for implementing evidence-based management among nursing executives, but on a more specific level.

That viewpoint concentrates on what

an individual manager in an organization can do, rather than what Management with a capital 'M' should do to institute evidence-based management. Beyond a personal professional commitment to using the best evidence, the prescription recommends discussions with colleagues, participation in data collection, and sharing of evidence and analysis. Also suggested are roles for researchers and associations, SLA in particular. One example of how the association has responded is with its current call for research grant proposals that focus on evidence-based practice.

The lack of time and organizational support should not be taken lightly, but as mentioned earlier for many librarians (in any environment) the research orientation of evidence-based practice is a major hurdle to overcome. The thing to keep in mind is the research does not need to be original, hypothesis-based research. While gathering original data can be done (and sometimes quickly and easily), the evidence can be identified from an analysis of previously gathered data.

The goal becomes finding an appropriate book, article, or report on a topic of interest. In some instances, attending a conference session or workshop could help identify evidence that can be used in decision-making. Once the research has been located, the emphasis is on evaluating the research to determine how useful it could be to a given situation in your organization. In this scenario, you want to ask what evidence has been gathered, how it was gathered, how it was analyzed and how applicable it is to your situation.

Resources for Special Libraries

Given the barriers to using evidence-

based practice, the question becomes, What resources would enhance the use of evidence-based management in special libraries? Additionally, what factors should these resources have to increase their acceptance and use by the special library community? Though not exhaustive, a list of factors might include the following:

- The source of evidence needs to be readily accessible, which in most instances means electronically available or at the very least a print-based serial publication of some kind.
- Both library and non-library environments should be included to help us expand our horizons and adopt a broader view of what might be applicable to our home institution.
- Some type of initial evaluation of the information needs to have been made so the special librarian can assess the resource with confidence. This includes articles from peer-reviewed publications, Web sites, or publications sponsored by a reputable source.
- A standard format for reviews of evidence-based literature needs to be used so the special librarian can quickly determine the relevance and validity of the review and its potential use.

Now let's look at some resources that information professionals can turn to for help in applying evidence-based management.

1. Pfeffer and Sutton's evidence-based Management Web site (www.evidence-basedmanagement.com) is the de facto home for evidence-based management. It includes an extensive bibliography as well as frequently updated columns, concrete examples of evidence-based management in use, and examples of evidence-based management being taught (primarily in business schools).
2. The *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* e-journal (<http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLIP/index>) is the first place to look for analytical summaries of the

“A focus on evidence use may also ultimately help to blur the boundaries between researchers, educators, and managers, creating a lively community with many feedback loops where information is systematically gathered, evaluated, disseminated, implemented, reevaluated, and shared.”

evidence-based literature in librarianship. It reflects our general finding that the majority of evidence-based information in our field focuses on operational issues—which can be used by managers—but not on management per se. More needs to be published on evidence-based management in libraries.

3. *Libraries Using Evidence* (www.newcastle.edu.au/service/library/gosford/eb1) and especially its EBLIP Toolkit (www.newcastle.edu.au/service/library/gosford/eb1/toolkit) are full of well-organized information, but it is the Toolkit that is a straightforward tool for carrying out and evaluating evidence-based research.

4. Lindsay Glynn’s “A Critical Appraisal Tool for Library and Information Research” in *Library Hi Tech* reviews appraisal models in several fields and devised a tool consisting of a list of questions to ask about a research study to judge its validity, applicability, and appropriateness. This kind of appraisal tool would work well for quantitative studies of library functions but would be difficult to apply to general management studies that deal with qualitative and prescriptive topics.

5. Graham Walton’s “*Theory, Research and Practice in Library Management*,” a new column for *Library Management*, reviews a different area of library management each time, beginning with

the topic of “flexibility.” It provides guidance within an evidence-based framework, but it remains to be seen whether it will provide practical analysis relevant to special libraries.

6. Outsell Inc. (www.outsellinc.com) does market research for the information industry and provides consulting services to special libraries and their organizations. It has accumulated a large database of survey results from corporations and government agencies that can be used by subscribers of their service to apply to local special libraries. Outsell analysts periodically produce reports summarizing the data on selected topics and recommend steps managers can

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use to apply that evidence. They also specialize in performing needs assessments and strategic assessments. In a way, the Outsell database and analyses serve as a collaborative center for evidence-based management for corporate and government information professionals, however, the information is proprietary.

7. The SLA Web site (www.sla.org) includes the strategies identified by its Research Committee for implementing evidence-based management www.sla.org/content/resources/research/rsrchstatement.cfm), the SLA information portal on LIS research (www.sla.org/content/resources/infoportals/research.cfm), and a variety of resources to use for evidence-based practice in special libraries. Other resources are dispersed among the newsletters, Web pages, and blogs of the SLA subject-oriented divisions and papers presented at the annual conference.
8. Also available are various compilations of evidence-based practice in

other fields, such as the What Works Clearinghouse in education (www.whatworks.ed.gov), the Campbell Collaboration in justice and social sciences (www.campbellcollaboration.org), and the Cochrane Collaboration in medicine (www.cochrane.org/index.htm), especially for learning how it does critical appraisals and systematic reviews.

No doubt, other relevant resources will come to mind for most special librarians. Of particular interest would be a resource that reinforces the subject focus of the parent organization that supports the special library in question.

Conclusion

Any organization that seeks to incorporate evidence-based management will find it a time-consuming and often frustrating process. Additionally, what works for one organization may not work for another organization even within the same industry. The best,

most rigorously obtained evidence is worthless if applied to an organization without the informed judgment of those in the organization itself.

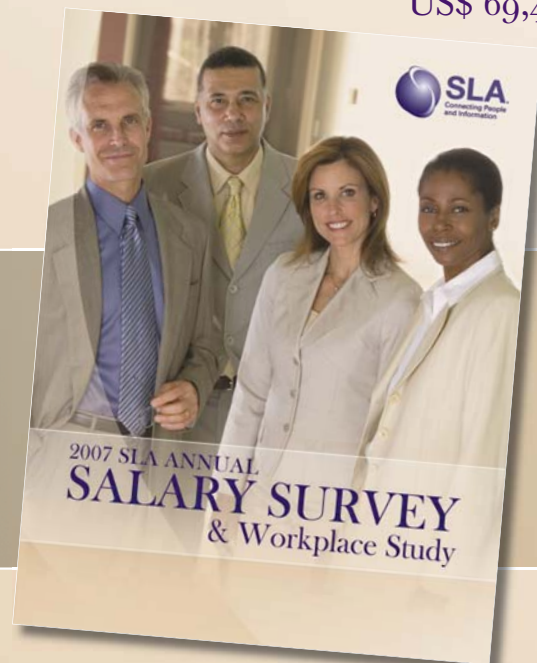
Still, anyone who manages anything in a library setting can and should make use of evidence-based management, especially the aspect of it that says to question the conventional wisdom and to base your decisions on the best available evidence. This is especially true for those of us in the corporate or government sector where libraries are being downsized and information professionals have to develop new roles for themselves. It is only by incorporating the evidence-based management principles into every aspect of our managerial roles that we will be able to convince higher management of our value and continue to contribute to our respective organizations. **SLA**

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Applying Scientifically Based Research to a Peppermint Patty

UNDERSTANDING SCIENTIFICALLY BASED RESEARCH IS USEFUL SKILL. THIS ARTICLE TAKES A LIGHT APPROACH TO EXPLAIN THE PRINCIPLES OF DESIGNING A STUDY.

BY CYBÈLE ELAINE WERTS

One evening when I was about 10, my dad was making rotisserie chicken, always my favorite, along with macaroni and cheese, my other favorite. When I asked him which brand of mac and cheese was best, he didn't just spout an opinion, he said that the thing to do was to figure it out. The way to figure it out, he said, was to do a blind taste test. So we did, discovering that Prince beat Kraft by a nose. My dad's analytical turn of mind had something to do with being a research statistician at Educational Testing Service, the place that turns out the SATs.

During one of my longer conference calls, I was reading Patricia Lauer's *A Policymaker's Primer on Education Research: How to Understand, Evaluate and Use It* and snickering from my end of the phone line would have put me in quite the pickle. Now I like to read this stuff, but I'm willing to bet that some of you find it a bit dry. Still, it's critical that you understand scientifically based research (SBR), which also is

called evidence-based research. For example, you don't want to recommend Joe Blow's Web site on how to tie sailing knots to your client, and then find out Mr. Blow did not scientifically research his knots.

Scientifically based research is for everyone. This approach to a subject means that it was looked at in a logical manner, with comparison to well-known work in the field, and reviewed by experts. Whether you're considering the best macaroni and cheese, the best reading program for your elementary school, or the best knot to keep a sailboat tightly moored, you'll want to approach it with an analytical mind.

My plan here is to use something entertaining to illustrate how it all works. That is, we'll all learn a few things under the auspices of munching out on chocolate.

Principles

But first, some serious information: It's a very broad subject, so this article is not intended to be even the slightest bit encompassing. What it is intended to do

is whet your appetite a bit and get you to think critically about whatever material is crossing your desk that's being sold as research-based, evidence-based, or scientifically based.

In her book, Lauer cited National Research Council that say that a study has to:

1. Pose significant questions that can be investigated empirically.
2. Link research to relevant theory.
3. Use methods that permit direct investigation of the question.
4. Provide a coherent and explicit chain of reasoning.
5. Replicate and generalize across studies.
6. Disclose research to encourage professional scrutiny and critique.

To make it a bit tastier, let's design a study that will be scientifically based so that it fits those guidelines, more or less. To do this, I'll take each of the guidelines and expand on it by describing my study. You can also read an expanded version of these questions from the



National Research Council in the sidebar for more details on each one.

Study Title: Construct Validity and the Interpretation of Different Hypotheses and Errors of Inference in the Effects of Peppermint Patties on the Work Habits of Information Professionals—An Empirical Confirmatory Study.

1. Pose significant questions that can be investigated empirically.

The advertising tagline for York Peppermint Patties is, “Get the Sensation!” I decided to test this declaration with an audience of information professionals, translating it broadly to mean that we will be more passionate and inspired in our work. Putting that in a measurable goal, we might state that: “As a result of consuming between two and six peppermint patties each day for a total of six months, each member of the study will initiate and lead one new information services-related project during this period.” This idea then is a hypothesis that we haven’t

seen addressed before, although we are hoping to expand on the scientific knowledge that does exist on the health and stimulant effects of both peppermint and chocolate.

Is the question a “significant” one? That might be debated, but I’d say that keeping our motivation at optimal levels is critical to the success of our industry.

2. Link research to relevant theory.

There is a fair bit of literature to support this requirement, including research on how peppermint is a stimulant, the so-called urban myth about chocolate in general making people feel like they are in love and the effects of dark chocolate in lowering and stabilizing blood pressure. The theory that the combination of these ingredients provides a stimulant effect sufficient to motivate a career person to initiate projects is the conceptual framework that we’ll be working from throughout this project.

Looking at peppermint first, we know that the oil is prepared from the leaves and the flowering tops that contain its

Here’s flowers for you:

*Hot lavender, mints,
savory, marjoram,*

*The marigold, that goes
to bed wi’ the sun,*

*And with him rises weep-
ing; these are flowers*

*Of middle summer, and
I think they are given*

To men of middle age.

—Shakespeare: *The Winter’s Tale*

very volatile and active component, menthol. Botanical.com notes that, “peppermint is good to assist in raising internal heat and inducing perspiration.” That certainly explains why you might be feeling “the sensation” when eating a peppermint patty.

It’s not just the peppermint that’s likely to bring you to a state of delight, however. According to Ellen Kuwana in her article, “Discovering the Sweet Mysteries of Chocolate”: “Eating chocolate may be pleasurable because of a unique interaction among a few of its components. Chocolate also contains phenylethylamine, a chemical related to amphetamines. Like amphetamines, this chemical causes blood pressure and blood-sugar levels to rise, resulting in a feeling of alertness and contentment. Phenylethylamine has been called the ‘love-drug’ because it quickens your pulse, as if you are in love. Caffeine in chocolate may also cause feelings of alertness and a pounding heart.”

Fortunately, in addition to the stimulated hearts that have our informa-

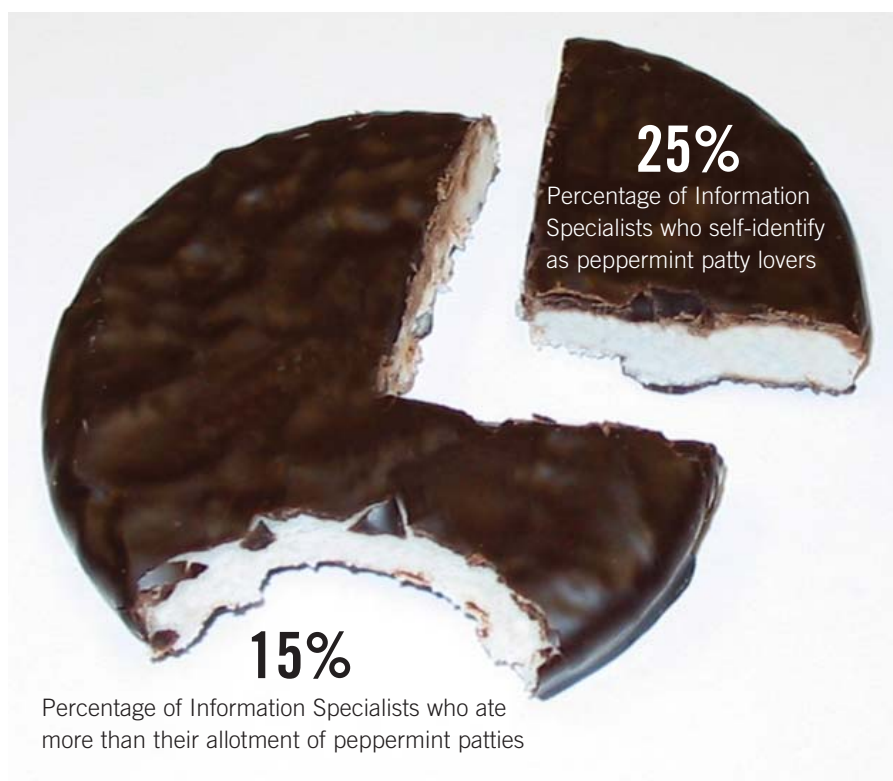


Figure 1. Breakout Study Participants

tion specialists feeling more passionate about their work, the particularly dark chocolate of which most peppermint patties are made have been shown in several studies quite possibly to be good for you. This is because the raw or minimally processed cocoa that is found in dark chocolate contains flavonoids similar to those found in green tea, antioxidants that have, in preliminary studies, been linked to decreased blood pressure, improved circulation, improved digestion and stimulation of the kidneys. In particular, the 2003 study "Dark Chocolate Lowers Blood Pressure," published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* showed a lowering of blood pressure for study participants who ate dark chocolate. Their systolic blood pressure dropped an average of five points and their diastolic reading dropped an average of nearly two points.

Overall, our information specialists can look forward to not only the pleasure and effects of the peppermint patties, but a possible overall improvement in their health, although health club owners observed that the effects of this

study on the subject might linger long after the completion of the investigation. We hope the participants won't try to eat more than their allotment.

3. Use methods that permit direct investigation of the question.

We plan to recruit 300 information specialists and break them into six groups, five of which will receive various amounts and types of peppermint patties and one that will be the control group. The information specialists will be culled from the audience of *Information Outlook*, the magazine of the Special Libraries Association where my articles most often are published, although who knows, with any luck this one will make JAMA. We will also screen applicants to make sure they like chocolate and mint, and are not allergic to any of the ingredients.

Peppermint patties were purchased anonymously from five companies: York (Group #1), Richardson's Candy Kitchen (Group #2), Lake Champlain Chocolates (Group #3), Snowflake Chocolates (Group #4), and NECCO Haviland Thin Mints (Group #5).

These will be distributed to our participants except for our control group, #6. Participants will respond to daily online surveys to track their progress on health issues such as blood sugar and weight, as well as work motivation and progress. The survey design has been developed by the study author and has been externally evaluated to provide a 99.44% reliability and validity.

There are some possible problems and limitations to the research method. These include data issues regarding self reporting, audience selection skewing having to do with using information professionals only from the SLA pool, linking success in initiating work to actual intake of the peppermint patties, and inability by participants to eat only the peppermint patties allowed. We are currently in the process of developing alternate options to deal with these possible issues. A detailed page manual of the procedures, daily online survey, and issues addressed for this study is available upon request.

4. Provide a coherent and explicit chain of reasoning.

Our belief is that the ingredients of the peppermint patties will stimulate our information professionals just enough so that they will be motivated to be more involved and proactive in their careers.

Late in his life, my father passed on to me his secret statistical formula "UR=U8," which I will use for the very first time in this study. He told me that the formula is best understood when spoken aloud. Using this principle, we will be able to measure participants' progress on the health front with great precision, as well as discern a direct link between intake and occupational success. We should also be able to address some difference between brands and possibly determine whether the percentage of peppermint oil and/or cocoa had any specific effect.

In order to rule out alternative and rival explanations for our results, we will control for such errors in various ways, including asking participants not to eat any other chocolate or mint products of any type during the study period,

NRC'S SIX PRINCIPLES FOR A RESEARCH STUDY

1 POSE SIGNIFICANT QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE INVESTIGATED EMPIRICALLY.

Empirical research involves investigation that uses observations to guide conclusions. Research questions that are significant do one or more of the following:

- Fill in the gaps in what we know about a topic.
- Seek to identify why something occurs.
- Solve a practical problem.
- Test a new idea or hypothesis.
- Expand on scientific knowledge from prior theories and research.

2 LINK RESEARCH TO RELEVANT THEORY.

Theories vary in scope; the more well-known scientific theories tend to be broad, such as Einstein's theory of relativity. Theories that are smaller in scope, sometimes referred to as conceptual frameworks, guide most research studies, particularly in the social sciences and education. Nonetheless, such theories provide the reason for the research design and interpretation of the findings. For example, the theory behind teacher professional development is that teacher learning influences instruction, which in turn influences student achievement. This theory is relatively small in scope because it applies only to teacher learning, in contrast to a theory such as Piaget's, which applies to child and adolescent development. Theories that are small in scope, however, can provide the rationale for scientific research.

3 USE METHODS THAT PERMIT DIRECT INVESTIGATION OF THE QUESTION.

This principle means that the research method should be appropriate to the research question. The appropriateness of one method over another is the subject of debate. This is particularly true in the social sciences where research

studies usually involve human subjects. Principle 3 however, does not focus on a particular research method. Rather, it emphasizes that a report on a research study should indicate the following:

- The link between the research question and the method used and why the method is the most appropriate.
- A detailed description of the method and procedure so that other researchers can repeat the study.
- Possible problems or limitations with the research method.
- As Principle 1 indicates, science involves the measurement of observations. In social science research, this means that human behavior will be observed, measured and recorded. The method used to measure observations is critical because errors in measurement can influence the results.
- For this reason, research studies should report on the validity and reliability of the measuring instruments that are used.

4 PROVIDE A COHERENT AND EXPLICIT CHAIN OF REASONING.

Conclusions about the results of research are based on inferential reasoning. This means that researchers make logical judgments based on the results of their research and on conclusions from prior research. The logic of their judgments depends on their research questions and the methods they used. An important part of this logical reasoning is to rule out alternate or rival explanations, also referred to as threats to validity. To counter such threats, researchers need to indicate in their studies how they avoided or controlled for such errors.

5 REPLICATE AND GENERALIZE ACROSS STUDIES.

Replication means that a researcher who uses the same study method in the same situations or contexts as another researcher can make the same observations and obtain the same results.

(Alternatively, the same researcher can obtain the same results on two different occasions.) Generalization refers to how much the results can be replicated in different contexts and with different populations. When the results of a study can be replicated and generalized, the results can be trusted more than results from studies without these characteristics. Usually, many research studies are needed to produce a body of knowledge that provides this information.

6 DISCLOSE RESEARCH TO ENCOURAGE PROFESSIONAL SCRUTINY AND CRITIQUE.

Through this principle, the National Research Council emphasizes that the accumulation of scientific knowledge depends on its dissemination to members of the scientific community for professional critique. Researchers should submit their reports to journals and publications that require peer review. Presentations on research at professional conferences also provide the opportunity for critique. To facilitate scrutiny, researchers should keep accurate and accessible records of their investigations so they can provide information for review purposes. For education research to advance, the community of education researchers must enforce the norms of scientific research when judging education research studies.

Reprinted with permission from Appendix B of *A Policymaker's Primer on Education Research: How to Understand, Evaluate and Use It* by Patricia Lauer (www.mcrel.org/PDF/SchoolImprovementReform/9713TG_SchoolImprovement_Primer6-04.pdf)

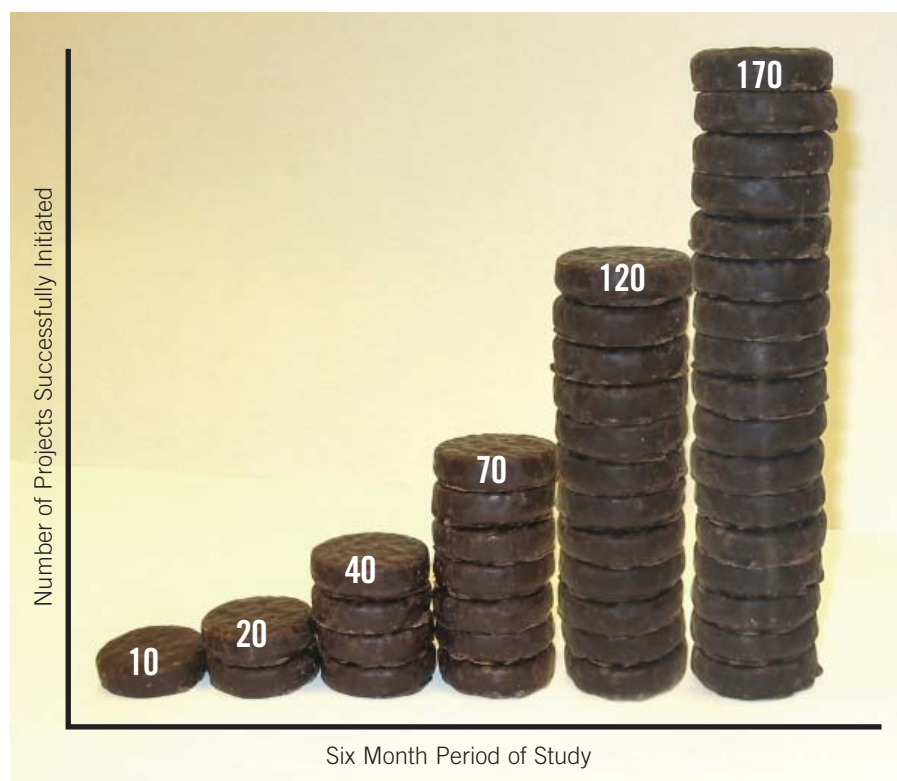


Figure 2. Extrapolated estimated increase in number of projects successfully initiated by information Specialists within the six month period of the study. Note: each block = 10 projects

provide objective confirmation of their project's status from their managers, and receive special training on blood sugar testing as well as data entry as it relates to the daily survey.

Some hypothetical extrapolated data based on this statistical formula in an empirical confirmatory system is shown in Figures 1 and 2.

5. Replicate and generalize across studies.

As there have been no studies in this specific area to date, this work will be groundbreaking. That said, it would be easy to replicate, as both the product (peppermint patties) and the audience (information specialists) are easily accessible.

6. Disclose research to encourage professional scrutiny and critique.

This study will be submitted to the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) for review, as well as the American Herb Association and the National Confectioners Association. In addition, the Society of Upper Graduate

Associates Research (SUGAR) human subjects research board convened to certify the study was conducted in good taste. The first-level literature used for the summary above is listed in the references below and additional references will be provided upon request.

Conclusion

I hope this study on the effects of peppermint patties has given you a good sense of what scientifically based research is. If not, you may need to re-read the article while eating a few patties to stimulate your brain activity. Readers of this article must be also

be cautioned that they are specifically excluded from being participants in the study. In fact, since the description of the study was only for illustration of the technique, it won't be conducted at all. Readers need not worry about receiving boxes of peppermint patties in the mail—or daily online survey forms.

In the meantime, I'm developing my next study on macaroni and cheese to review my dad's methods vis-à-vis whether he may have skewed the data through errors of inference due to errors of measurement.

Resources

National Research Council—See www.nationalacademies.org/nrc.

Evidence-Based Library and Information Practice Online Journal

—EBLIP is an open-access, peer-reviewed journal published quarterly by the University of Alberta Learning Services and supported by an international team of editorial advisors. The purpose of the journal is to provide a forum for librarians and other information professionals to discover research that may contribute to decision making in professional practice. EBLIP publishes original research and commentary on the topic of evidence based library and information practice, as well as reviews of previously published research (evidence summaries) on a wide number of topics. See <http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLip>.

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Book Review: Evidence-Based Practice for Information Professionals, edited by Andrew Booth and Anne Brice—

The Information Research Web site is an open-access, international, scholarly journal, dedicated to making accessible the results of research across a wide range of information-related disciplines. It is privately published and edited by T.D. Wilson. See <http://informationr.net/ir/reviews/revs142.html>.

Research Based Web-Design and Usability Guidelines—

Written by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, these guidelines were designed by experts using extensive research efforts similar to the ones outlined in this article. See www.usability.gov/pdfs/guidelines.html.

“Evidence-Based Research: Its Role in Developing the DPHT Strategic Plan”, by Karen Kreizman Reczek, *Information Outlook*, July 2002—See www.sla.org.

[org/content/Shop/Information/infoonline/2002/jul02/kex.cfm](http://www.sla.org/content/Shop/Information/infoonline/2002/jul02/kex.cfm).

A Policymaker's Primer on Education Research: How to Understand, Evaluate and Use It, by Patricia A Lauer, a Joint effort of Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning and the Education Commission of the States, February 2004—

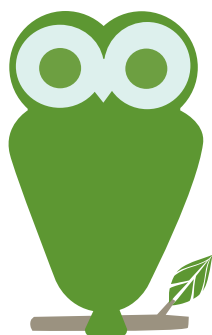
The goal of this primer is to help policymakers and others interested individuals answer three questions: 1. What does the research say? 2. Is the research trustworthy? 3. How can the research be used to guide policy? See www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/Research/primer/foreword.asp.

Webcast on Scientifically Based Research—

View a free archived webcast on scientifically based research to learn more about what this means for you as a district or site administrator, decision maker or someone who seeks external resources and programs

for schools. See www.schoolsmovingup.net/cs/wested/view/e/47.

Online Study Modules—This research module is a free tool for educators interested in better understanding scientifically based research. The State Educational Technology Directors Association has compiled a large collection of tools that can be used to evaluate and conduct research as well as secure funding to conduct future research. See www.setda.org/web/guest/sbr.



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Are You Ready for SLA's Board of Directors? Do You Know Someone Who Is?

The Nominating Committee has reported for duty and is at your service looking for the next leaders of SLA. The committee will meet at the SLA Leadership Summit in Louisville, Kentucky, 23-26 January 2008 to recommend a slate of nominees to the board to take office in 2009. To do the best job, the committee needs help from the membership. Specifically, the Nominating Committee is directed to:

1. Seek recommendations for nominees from suitable sources in the association, especially from among chapter and division officers.
2. Select a balanced slate of nominees, and upon their acceptance,
3. Present the slate to the Board of Directors.

To ensure broad representation on the board, the Nominating Committee invites members to nominate themselves or recommend colleagues who might serve in the following positions: President-Elect, Chapter Cabinet Chair-Elect, Division Cabinet Chair-Elect, and two Directors.

The committee is looking for 10 leaders, two candidates for each of the five positions, for 2009.

Details about responsibilities for each of these positions can be found at: www.sla.org/content/SLA/governance/bodsection/descriptions.cfm

To ensure SLA continues to be relevant and influential in the information- and knowledge-based 21st century, it is critical for the board to be composed of a diverse, enthusiastic, and visionary group of individuals committed to the profession. Members who have been active and successful contributors to chapters, divisions or association-level committees are needed as candidates.

There are many SLA members in the organization who can fill this need, although members of the Nominating Committee may not know all of them. Therefore, you are invited to submit names, including your own name if you wish to be considered.

All information submitted will be handled confidentially.

Please forward the following information for people you think are ready and willing to serve the profession as SLA board:

- Nominee's name, address, phone number.
- The position recommended for each nominee.
- The nominee's length of SLA membership.
- Offices held in chapters, divisions, or at the association level by the nominee.
- The nominee's membership in association-level committees.
- Other activities of the nominee with SLA (on chapter and division committees, CE courses taught, awards received, articles published, etc).

Include other information that may help the committee. For example, what it is about this person that makes her or him a great nominee for the election slate? What distinguishes the nominee among his or her colleagues?

Recommendations may be sent to any of the following by
15 January 2008:

Chair

Richard Geiger (2006-2008), rgeiger@sfchronicle.com
San Francisco Chronicle, 901 Mission Street ,
San Francisco, CA 94103

Committee Members

- Lynne McCay, chair-elect, lmccay@crs.loc.gov
- Susan Fingerman, smfinfo@erols.com
- Suzi Hayes, suzihayes@bellsouth.net
- Christina de Castell, christinajzeller@hotmail.com
- Linda Broussard, staff committee member, lbroussard@sla.org

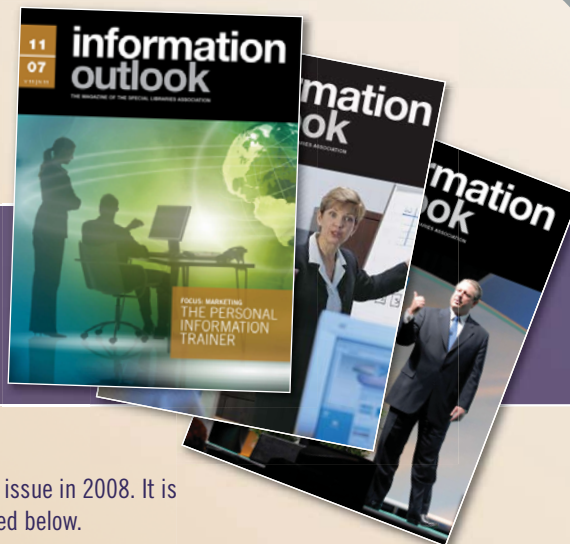
Leaders, take the first step. Name yourself or identify others who are ready for the next step in their professional careers. Give back to SLA and identify those leaders you know are waiting in the wings to take on these rewarding and fun leadership roles.

Serving on the SLA Board of Directors is guaranteed to be a challenging and rewarding experience. It will provide an opportunity to expand management and leadership abilities through service in an international professional association. Please give some serious thought to who might bring fresh ideas and energy to the board and send us your recommendations.



**YOU'RE THE EXPERT,
SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW.**

2008 Information Outlook Editorial Calendar



We're always looking for new authors for Information Outlook.

The editorial calendar below shows major topics we want to cover for each issue in 2008. It is only a starting point. We need more articles on more topics than we've listed below.

If you want to write on a topic that isn't on the calendar, or on a topic that isn't listed for a particular issue, we want to hear from you. For example, articles on topics like marketing, searching, and technology will be welcome throughout the year. We want to hear all of your ideas.

If our descriptions of the topics don't fit your approach and you have a different idea, let us know.

March	Web Searching (Possible topics: Meta directories, using online search engines, the best sites for various content areas)	Jan. 21
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SLA 2008 Seattle Preview ▪ Digital Information Sources (Possible topics: Selection process, RFP writing, maximizing usage) 	Feb. 18
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SLA 2007 Denver Preview ▪ Career Development (Possible topics: Professional development, gaining expertise in content areas, résumé writing, interview tactics) 	March 17
June	Legal Issues (Possible topics: Copyright, licensing, file sharing, contract negotiations Bonus distribution at SLA Annual Conference and INFO-EXPO)	April 21
July	Management (Possible topics: Planning, budgeting, supervising a staff, purchasing)	May 19
August	Conference Papers Showcase	June 23
September	Copyright (Possible topics: Global considerations, permissions, new laws and regulations)	July 21
October	Web 2.0 (Possible topics: Next generation Web sites, social networking, XML, RSS, podcasting)	Aug. 18
November	Knowledge Management (Possible topics: KM systems, indexing information, low-budget KM)	Sept. 22
December	Web Searching (Possible topics: Meta directories, using online search engines, the best sites for various content areas)	Oct. 20



For information on how to submit an article to Information Outlook, see <http://www.sla.org/content/Shop/Information/writingorio/index.cfm#needtoknow> or contact jadams@sla.org.

On the Cusp of Change

FROM ART TEACHER TO INFO PRO, HER CAREER HAS CHANGED—AND CHANGED WITH THE TIMES.

BY FORREST GLENN SPENCER

Patricia O'Brien Libutti, a retired member, has been surprised by the accolades she received in the past year.

In April, the SLA Education Division gave her the Anne Galler Award for Professional Excellence. The award celebrates an individual who "has demonstrated professional excellence in the field of education librarianship or library education and/or has provided outstanding service to the Education

Division." In June, the Association of College and Research Libraries celebrated her achievements with the Education and Behavioral Sciences Section Distinguished Education and Behavioral Sciences Librarian Award. The prize included a plaque and a \$1,000 cash prize donated by publisher John Wiley & Sons. Libutti was honored for her contribution to the field of education and behavioral sciences librarianship, and the mentoring of librarians in the field.

Patricia O'Brien Libutti

Joined SLA: 1999

Job: Librarian Emeritus, Education/Social Sciences

Employer: Rutgers University Libraries, New Brunswick, New Jersey

Experience in the profession: 18 years

Education: MLS, Rutgers University; PhD., educational psychology, Temple University; MEd, art education, Tyler Art School, Temple University; BA art education, Seton Hill College.

First job: Art educator.

Library Job: Part time, Ramapo State University, New Jersey, 1988

Biggest Challenge: In all library jobs, to learn and teach in the evolving social technology environment.



Now, *Information Outlook* is asking questions for a profile of her career.

"This has been an adventure for me because I had not actually thought of these sorts of things occurring at this point in my career," Libutti said, referring to the profile. "I really hadn't. I thought the same thing when I got these two awards: one from ALA and one SLA, both after I had retired. I was surprised and very happy with the ARCL in particular because they included money, so I went and took a fly-fishing vacation."

Libutti retired in September 2006. Her last employer was Rutgers University, where she served as social sciences/education librarian in the Alexander Library. Today she's an emerita at Rutgers. And even though she's retired, she couldn't quite put her career aside. Libutti said she had made a brief foray toward writing a new book and making a proposal for it, but then she realized it wasn't the best path to pursue.

The book, concerning quantitative analysis and the library, was to be titled *Observe, Reflect, Act: A Librarian's Guide to Quantitative Analysis*. "I got two other people to pick up on this," she said, "to take the proposal and to move with it. I had the authors and all these things set up but I realized I couldn't continue in that direction; because once you are retired, certain things do happen."

Libutti said she might not be the representative of SLA's retired members—or even know what that even means. "My guess is that you remain in a supporting role for the profession—that you're willing to support the profession with your membership and your connection with information professionals."

A Busy Career

Taking a glance at her extensive résumé one may assume that she has been in the profession most of her adult life based upon the institutions she was employed by, her college degrees, presentations given, and the number of books she has written, edited, or contributed to. But Libutti was only in the information field for 18 years. Prior to becoming an information special-

ist, she was a teacher and education researcher. She earned her bachelor's in art education from Seton Hill in 1966 and then her master's of education in art education in 1970 from Tyler Art School at Temple University. She had planned to be an arts educator, but an unfortunate event occurred.

"I had to put a great deal of work into print making," she said, "and I was toxically poisoned by the ingredients that I used. And at a certain point—young, really—I had to leave my first profession, which I was happy in, being an educator and an artist. I couldn't tolerate the materials, and I could not easily walk into a classroom. This was pre-OSHA," she said, referring to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which, among other things, establishes guidelines for the use of toxins in the workplace. "To this day, I still have to be wary of certain things, but I managed to find my way into doing artwork on my own."

In search of a new career, she decided to pursue her other interest in life, psychology. "I was interested in human creativity—I always have been—and the impact of the social environment on individual creativity. I wanted to study

that. At the time, I thought it would be a reasonable career path. I've always been interested in the idea of how human beings develop their ideas, what impact others have on them. That's why I have focused—in my own mind and my own interests—on the social structures in libraries."

In 1978, Libutti earned her PhD in educational psychology from Temple University but found the job market wanting. "Once I thought I got a PhD," she said with a laugh, "this is a dream world. I would get a job into the university or college. As I found out, I didn't. There were so many people like me who didn't; the university jobs weren't open."

She soon found work as a human relations specialist in Teaneck, New Jersey, and then as a teacher and coordinator for gifted and talented students.

By the mid-1980's, Libutti started considering librarianship as a new career field. "I made that transition mid-career. I spoke with numerous people who have gotten doctorates and ended up in university libraries. It's a very similar profile. I chose a field that was very compatible." She entered Rutgers in 1987 and earned her MLS only nine months later. "I was intense and I took



Libutti, left, receives the Ann Galler award from SLA Education Division chair Sharon Weiner, at the SLA conference in June.

Early information specialists could not have possibly imagined how to deal with the changes of the profession—especially the role of technology distribution of information. But they adapted very quickly and very well.

advantage of every available technology framework that I could, that I was interested in it.”

But one interest never left her: psychology. In fact, her interest in human behavior shaped her career for the next 18 years. She entered the profession at a time that the core and face of the information field was in flux and librarians were redefining themselves and their practices.

“I have certainly seen a major change in librarians,” Libutti began, “because it was, at that time frame, it was the whole process that had changed. It was psychological. People began to question what they were doing, how they did it, the value of their role. I cannot tell you how many conference programs I looked at both from SLA and ALA that talked about reinventing yourself or the role of the librarian in the future. These constant themes over a period of 20 years were there. I questioned it and wrote about it, consistently, and it was exciting to be part of those changes.”

Changing Times

Libutti said early information specialists could not have possibly imagined how to deal with the changes of the profession—especially the role of technology distribution of information.

“It would happen across a wide array,” she said. “It would happen not only in the daily work they did but the nature of products they were being asked to use. These things were changing across the field, and I think [information professionals] went through serious confusion. But they adapted very quickly and very well.

“This might of have been the first occupational group—other than government and medicine—to adapt to technology as quickly as it did. Librarians across the field were asked to adapt social structures as well as technology, because those technology initiatives

were not supported as individual products. They were being supported as products being looked at by consortia, corporations and industries—and they supported all sorts of social structures in using these products. I had never thought of that until I started examining it carefully. I started writing books about the parallel structures of librarians being introduced to new things and expected to produce those new things very quickly.”

Libutti’s interest in was the interplay between what had been and what was coming in librarianship. It began when she started part-time at Ramapo State University and then while she was an adjunct assistant professor in education and then an education librarian at Fordham University Graduate School of Education. “That’s where I saw some of the beginnings of these social structures that captured my imagination. As I saw things coming into place and the technology that was to be installed in the library, which would be shared across a system and institutions. That was something I didn’t learn about in my librarianship preparation, but it certainly made every bit of sense because it fit into everything else that I’ve been prepared for.”

She remained at Fordham until 1998 and then became a solo librarian at ThinkQuest Inc. in Armonk, New York. The company nurtured children in producing educational Web sites. “I have to tell you, that was the best job I ever had,” Libutti said. “I saw those kids involved, and the people in the company were extremely forward-looking. Their ideas were dynamic.”

It was in 1999 that she sought out and joined SLA. At the time, she was already a member of ALA and had been chair of the Education and Behavioral Sciences Section of ARCL from 1994-1995. She has been active with ALA since 1991 and active in the National Education

Network since 1997. But when she was a solo librarian with ThinkQuest, she realized she needed SLA.

“I knew there were meetings in New York that year, and I went to the conference,” Libutti recalled. “I got to meet the board of directors and the Education Division and then started enjoying meeting the people in New York City. I enjoyed what happened in New York. It’s one of the largest chapters and one of the most innovative ones. I did that for a while until I went back to academia. My involvement slowed down a bit with the chapters because I changed locations but I didn’t stop with the divisions. I continued to work with them.”

She remains a member of several chapters, divisions, and caucuses, and has held leadership roles in the SLA New York Chapter and Education Division, which she chaired in 2004. She said that her primary task as chair was to get an accurate picture of the division’s membership and publish a membership profile on its Web site.

“We were interested because we knew we were losing members,” Libutti said. “We were a very small division and quite concerned about the stability of that. We were very interested in recruiting members who would be willing to take on membership positions, which had become extremely problematic. We were trying to solidify what we had but determine our direction as to what might be, given the membership we actually had. We wanted to know what their interests were.”

At Rutgers

In the last five years of her career as an information specialist, Libutti worked at the Rutgers Alexander Library as a social sciences and education librarian. While she was there, she continued her studies of social structures and technological advancements within the

“The past 20 years have demonstrated the adaptability of information professionals and information is not going to go away just because the Internet is here.”

profession while learning a few new skills herself.

“I actually adapted to some new things before I left there,” she said. “There was a decline in the interest of faculty in having on-site classes as part of their curriculum, and they wanted me to see explore new alternatives—and I did. I put up some virtual classes. I put up a Web site, the Digital Scholars Notebook. I also did research on the effectiveness of tutorials. There

was a tutorial developed by Rutgers University from a template of another institution. I was involved in developing the research and I did it in a qualitative, analytical way.”

Throughout her career, Libutti has written extensively on the information field. She also has moderated or participated in many conference presentations, lectures, and demonstrations on the role of technology, its use, and the social structures that support it.

“I’ve always been a blabber mouth,” Libutti said. “I come from a real estate family—you can’t stop a salesman when you see one. I really got a sincere happiness out of talking about ideas with other people and getting other people to write, working with them on developing structures in their writing—and this is where my books came from. I didn’t write all those books myself. I really enjoy seeing the pieces of the puzzle fit together, the different ideas in a book complimenting each other or working with a person getting their idea on paper.”

Libutti has been recognized for her role in the profession as a mentor – an honor that took her by surprised. “Apparently, a number of people felt that I mentored them in their careers. It comes from interacting with people—that’s most enjoyable and challenging—but it’s a kind of conductivity—you gave to people what you had but you also learn an awful lot from them. So I wouldn’t say I had an ‘identified’ group. The kind of mentoring I did apparently was much more on the pragmatic level.” There were two people who mentored Libutti and helped shape her career: David Carr at the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Patricia Minuchin, PhD, at Temple University.

“David was one of the best guides I have ever seen, a guide and permission giver,” Libutti said. “With him I took risks in doing things that I wouldn’t have taken with other people, because most mentors have much more rigid



Researching Patent and Trademark Information

9 January 2008

Patent Information—Innovation and Discovery - Part 1

23 January 2008

Trademark Information—What’s in a Name? - Part 2

Presenter: Michael White, Research Services Librarian
Queen’s University

www.sla.org/clickulive

FORREST GLENN SPENCER is a Virginia-based information retrieval consultant, public relations distributor, and writer. He can be reached at fgspencer@gmail.com.



seen has been social and political. If a librarian is not informative along those lines or hasn't had a tendency to think along those lines then that's something they may take the time to do—because all the work that they do is in a social environment. It might be the survival of this field and of their jobs.” **SLA**

conceptions of what they would consider acceptable. And he did not. He was liberating to explore and try ideas that perhaps would not have met others' approval. I enjoyed working and taking some courses from him. He's been a supporter since.

“Patricia Minuchin, on the other hand, was perhaps my severest critic and probably helped me develop some strength in being able to dispute people. I became very good at knowing what it was I had done being able to document things. I did my dissertation [at Temple] and it took some time. It was a tough dissertation.”

But that's all in the past. Libutti now

is in retirement mode. She has been married for 40 years. Her husband is still working as a research scientist in chemistry, and they have one child and three grandchildren. She will remain in the information profession in some capacity.

“The past 20 years have demonstrated the adaptability of information professionals and information is not going to go away just because the Internet is here,” Libutti said. “There's going to be a continual need for critical thinking about information. I suspect that is the key area that librarians are going to provide. So much that I have

Selected Bibliography

Librarians as Learners, Librarians as Teachers: The Diffusion of Internet Expertise in the Academic Library by Patricia O'Brien Libutti (editor)

Digital Resources and Librarians: Case Studies in Innovation, Invention, and Implementation by Patricia O'Brien Libutti (editor)

Teaching Information Retrieval and Evaluation Skills to Education Students and Practitioners: A Casebook of Applications by Patricia O'Brien Libutti and Bonnie Gratch (editors)

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Reports from



IFLA

INFO PROS CONVERGED ON DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA, FOR IFLA'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE. HERE ARE REPORTS FROM SOME OF THE SLA REPRESENTATIVES.

Three thousand information professionals, half of them from Africa, gathered in Durban, South Africa, for meetings, workshops, and presentations at the 73rd annual conference of IFLA, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

The delegates came from 118 countries attended the week-long convention. After the host country, the United States, the U.K., China, and the Russian Federation sent the most conferees.

Highlights of the conference included announcement of a \$1 million grant to IFLA from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for library advocacy. The funding will support IFLA's work to strengthen awareness of the role libraries play in developing the information society.

Also at the IFLA meeting, the Gates Foundation's Global Libraries initiative presented its 2007 Access to Learning Award of \$1 million to the Northern Territory Library, a regional public library system based in Darwin, Australia. The award honors the library's approach to bringing computer and Internet technology to remote indigenous communities. Microsoft, a Global Libraries initiative partner, will donate an additional \$224,000 in software and technology training curriculum to upgrade the organization's 300 library computers.

Conference attendees visited several libraries in the region, including the University of Zululand Library, the Eleanor Bonnar Music Library at the Howard College campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and the Durban University of Technology Library.

A delegation of SLA members attended the South Africa conference. Some provided reports on their activities:

CLASSIFICATION AND INDEXING SECTION

Dorothy McGarry and Marcia Lei Zeng

The section's program included "Audio Description Text for Indexing Films," by James M. Turner and Suzanne Mathieu; "User Tagging of Library Resources: Toward a Framework for System Evaluation," by Jonathan Furner; "Taxonomy Directed Folksonomy: Integrating User Tagging and Controlled Vocabularies for Australian Education Networks," by Sarah Hayman and Nick Lothian; and "Greater Subject Access to Dewey Decimal Classification's Notation, with Special Reference to Indonesia's Geography, Period and Language Notations," by L. Sulistyo-Basuki.

The Standing Committee of the section had two meetings at which it discussed current activities and held elec-

tions. Patrice Landry was reelected as chair and Leda Bultrini was elected as secretary. Plans were discussed for the 2008 meeting in Quebec City and the 2009 meeting in Milan, and the strategic plan was revised.

The Working Group on Subject Access by National Bibliographic Agencies met to discuss a list of tasks that had been prepared by Patrice Landry and Françoise Bourdon and presented by Landry at a program session. The group will work on a list of elements with a description/scope of each element, why it is important, and so on.

A small group of the Multilingual Thesauri Guidelines Working Group also met to discuss the final version of the guidelines, will be released by the end of the year.

Details of activities of the FR SAR group were reported at the Division IV program. The group had three meetings at the Durban conference. Major outcomes include the entity-relationship model for subject authority data: WORK has subject THEMA and THEMA has appellation NOMEN. Here *thema* is the term used temporarily to refer to anything that can be the subject of a work. Thema includes any FRBR entity. Nomen is a term used temporarily to refer to any alpha numeric, sound, or visual symbol or combination of



symbols by which a thema is known, referred to or addressed. This THEMAMENOMEN relationship is consistent with what FRAD has proposed in its draft report, to separate what a thing is (the concept) from how it is known, referred to or addressed (its name/label). The group plans to have a draft final report ready for group discussions by the end of 2007. A revised version will be distributed for a world-wide review in early 2008.

CATALOGING SECTION

Marcia Lei Zeng and Dorothy McGarry

The Cataloging Section Standing Committee had a very active agenda. At its two meetings in Durban, it discussed the various Section activities.

The Consolidated ISBD and the report of the fourth International Meeting of Experts on an International Cataloguing Code were presented at a meeting of new IFLA publications. The fifth (and the last) of those meetings was held in Pretoria for the cataloging experts in the sub-Saharan African countries. Additional revisions of the draft of the principles document were recommended and are being considered by all previous IME ICC participants.

Reports were received on the ISBD

Review Group, the FRBR Review Group, a new Working Group on Metadata for Digital Objects, *Names of Persons*, Anonymous Classics, and the Multilingual Dictionary of Cataloguing Terms and Concepts (currently on hold). Plans were made for next year's conference in Quebec City and the 2009 conference in Milan, and the strategic plan was revised. Anders Cato was elected chair and Ben Gu was reelected secretary.

The Section's program included "Consolidated ISBD: A Step Forward" by Elena Escolano Rodríguez and Dorothy McGarry; "Cooperative Cataloguing in South Africa with Special Reference to the Gauteng and Environs Library Consortium (GAELIC)," by Hester Marais; "Implementing Online Catalogues in African Academic Libraries," by Mary Adwoa Arkorful; "Fifth International Meeting of Experts for an International Cataloguing Code," by Barbara B. Tillett; and a report on Cataloguing Section activities by section chair Judith Kuhagen.

The ISBD Review Group and the FRBR Review Group each had separate additional meetings. Some of the topics covered by the ISBD group included discussion of having the GMD be mandatory and possible locations, procedures for an Examples Working Group to prepare a supplement to the con-

solidated ISBD, report of an IFLA/IPA Steering Group meeting that had been held in Turin in March, and methods of communication for working on the ISBD update planned for 2009.

Marcia Zeng reported on behalf of the IFLA Working Group on Digital Library Guidelines which was established under IFLA President-elect Claudia Lux in early 2007. Zeng and Jeasun Lee from the Cataloguing Section will be writing the contents on metadata and subject access. The group will develop digital library guidelines and best practices for use by libraries and other cultural institutions around the world. The IFLA group is one of four working groups established at the conclusion of the UNESCO experts' meeting on the World Digital Library in December 2006.

MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING SECTION

Christie Koontz

The section held two programs at the conference. The growing interest in actual case studies of applied marketing strategies is evidenced by the unusually large attendance. Presenters discussed the significance of customer research and segmentation as well as product and service development based upon

these marketing activities. The speakers were geographically diverse which led to better attendance by more conferees.

Co-sponsored with Academic and Research Libraries, "Libraries in the Spotlight: Promotion and Marketing Strategies," offered three papers to more than 350 attendees.

The presenters were from the Bavarian State Library (Germany); National Library of Singapore; and Liverpool John Moore University, Liverpool, U.K.

The second program, co-sponsored with the Metropolitan Libraries Section, "Libraries—Crucial Institutions in a Complex Society," offered six papers to more than 550 people. The presenters were from Loughborough University (U.K.); San Jose State (U.S.); University of South Africa; Jamaica Library Service; Riga Central Library (Latvia); and Stockholm Public Library (Sweden).

The section is also the sponsor of the IFLA International Marketing Award. The winner was presented with \$1,000 and airfare and lodging for IFLA. Olga Einasto of Tartu University, Estonia, won first place for her campaign for provision of library services to working parents and their children (childcare) SirsiDynix is this year's award corporate sponsor.

The sections latest publication is also out. The Shanghai Pre-conference Proceedings, *Library Management and Marketing in a Multicultural World*, IFLA Publications 125. Section member Jim Mullins, is the editor.

The pre-conference session at Dakar, chaired by longtime member Rejean Savard. "Managing technologies and library automated systems in developing countries: Open Source vs. Commercial Options," attracted about 100 attendees. Papers will be edited and published in early 2008. The conference had few initial resources but gathered input and sponsors, and was in French and English.

The section is planning to cooperate with Library Theory and Research at IFLA's conference in Quebec in 2008 on the theme of "Library as Place." This theme will continue to a pre-conference IFLA 2009 in Milan. Section members feel the award and pre-con-

ference are the best recruiting tools for new members.

The section has strengthened and matured through establishing a midyear meeting. The section's midyear meeting is in Montpellier, France in February 2008.

LIBRARY THEORY AND RESEARCH SECTION

Marydee Ojala

The Library Theory and Research Section, having absorbed the Journals Section, focused on research into central library and information science concepts, within the context of the African region's cultural and linguistic differences.

The session began with Wahid Gdoura (Tunisia) giving an overview of the state of research in North Africa. LIS research reported in French and Arabic, the languages of North Africa, often does not appear in standard sources. Arab authors, he said, are more interested in describing than explaining. He believes it is necessary to break free from the theoretical model of Western knowledge and produce learning that fits the Arab reality.

The next two papers, already published in the official journal of the Library and Information Association of South Africa, provided bibliometric analyses of African LIS literature. Omwoyo Bosire Onyancha (South Africa) reported on his citation analysis of LIS published papers by African researchers from 1986 to 2006. He used the ISI Web of Science and EBSCO's LISTA for his data and concluded that South Africa is the most productive country, with Nigeria second.

In another bibliometric analysis, Dennis Ocholla and Lyudmilla Ocholla (South Africa) examined records from ISI Web of Science and LISA for South African authors from 1993 to 2006. Unlike Onyancha, they limited their analysis to peer-reviewed literature and used publication counts and analysis to determine South African research productivity. The amount of collaboration among researchers is particularly impressive.

The final paper in the session, by Kgomo Moahi (Botswana), was an analysis of LIS research in Botswana

from 1980 to 2006, using LISA data, but enhancing this with personal knowledge of LIS researchers and considering historical and cultural factors. Recent papers deal more with technology than librarianship. She strongly believes that practitioners need to become more involved with research. If libraries are to be an important force in creating the information society, it is vital that research come from both academics and those working in libraries. Info pros need collaborative research and intellectual companionship to put libraries on the agenda.

GOVERNMENT LIBRARIES SECTION

Jerry W. Mansfield

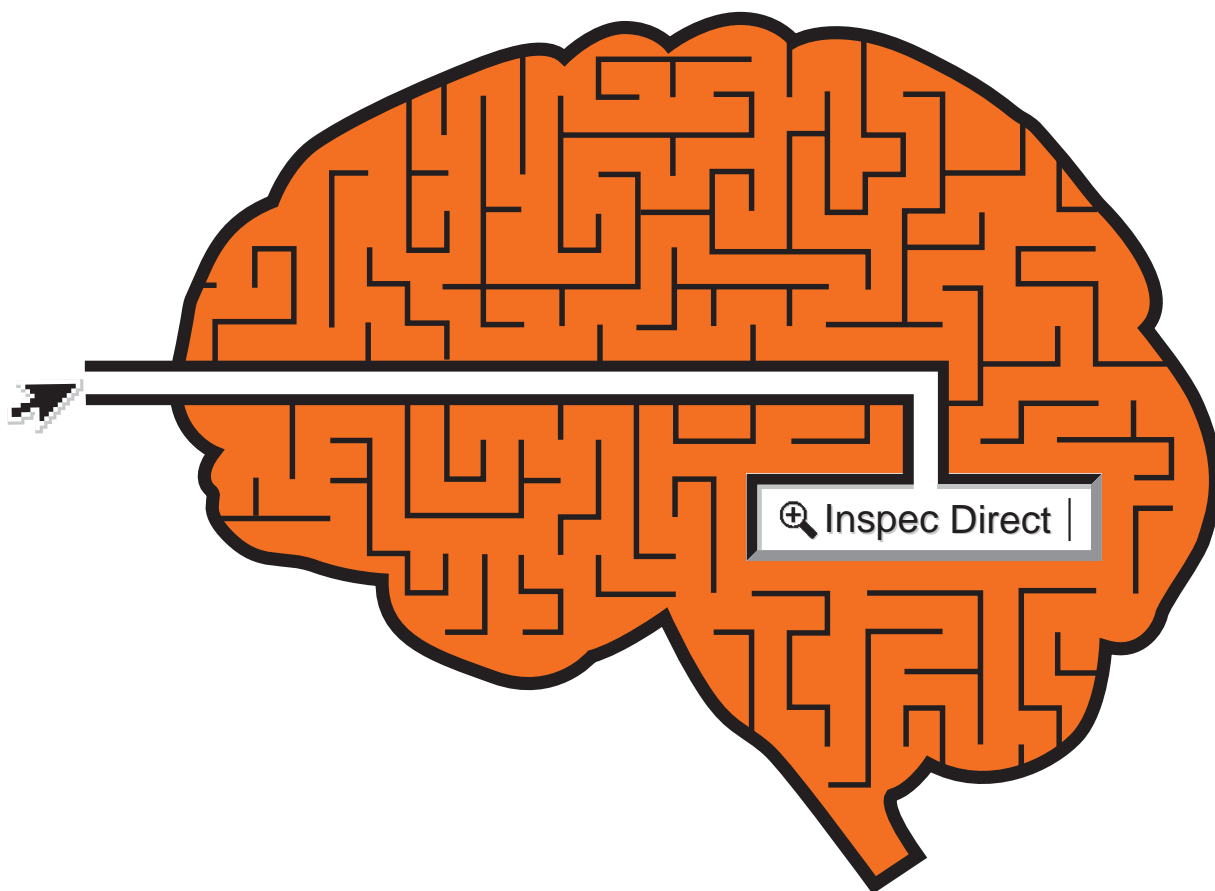
Sawubona – That's 'Hello' in Zulu, a greeting we heard often from our most hospitable and gracious South African librarian hosts at the conference. The Government Libraries Section's open paper program included papers presented from representatives from four countries on the theme, Government Libraries: Approaches to Multi-Lingual Collections and Services. The papers may be read at www.ifla.org/IV/ifla73/Programme2007.htm.

During the past two years the section has invested much time in the preparation and writing of *Guidelines for Libraries of Government Departments*. The resulting draft has been a collaborative writing project between several members of the section and it is our hope that the guidelines will serve as a model for libraries of government departments or agencies around the world as they seek examples of best practices, justification for their roles, advocacy issues, trends, and more.

A well attended public hearing on the draft guidelines was held during the conference and comments and reactions from that hearing will be used to edit and refine the document prior to being published by IFLA in 2008.

For more information on the section, see its Web site at www.ifla.org/VII/s4/index.htm. **SLA**

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FROM BRANDING TOWARD VALUES

BY STEPHEN MARVIN

What's a brand?

A brand represents you and your information services in the minds of your target market. It is a collection of perceptions in the mind of the consumer. Managing a brand involves coordinating marketing, communications strategies, and activities in order to achieve the goals and objectives you have set for the brand—in other words, what you want people to think and remember about you and your information services. That's the wisdom from Chris Olson, M.L.S., M.A.S., marketing consultant to information providers.

After seeing a presentation during the IFLA Congress, I am becoming very anti-branding.

A program on the successful promotion and advertising of perfume was filmed in the Bavarian Library—the fourth largest library in the world. The production company paid for all the expenses and paid the library for the use of its facilities. The IFLA session showed how this event exposed the library in a different way and was a good branding technique to get attention of area decision makers...but, branding for whom?

Certainly, not the library. It was more of a benefit to use the library as a brand for the perfume. Only smart people wear this perfume? The funding to the library only met the cost to provide the space, but did not meet the indirect costs for extra staff, guards and the fact the library had to close during the shoot? What *values* of the library were transmitted to the effort of this branding?

Another presentation during this segment had an example from the National Library of Singapore. It developed a



game-show program called “Ask A Stupid Question.” Students would submit a topic from which a group of librarians would develop a reply. There would be a corporate sponsor for this activity and a day was selected for the students to show off the results of their research.

This was a clever idea, but not apparently well received by the audience. The evaluation of this segment of the program was awful. The presenter was very energetic, articulate, and interactive, but the concept behind “Ask A Stupid Question” was at fault. For branding, it was great as an experiment, but failed to deliver the message. The peers in the audience rejected it.

Branding for the sake of branding won't work. Branding must be inclusive of the *values* of the service, attention to detail of the professionals and portrayal of quality.

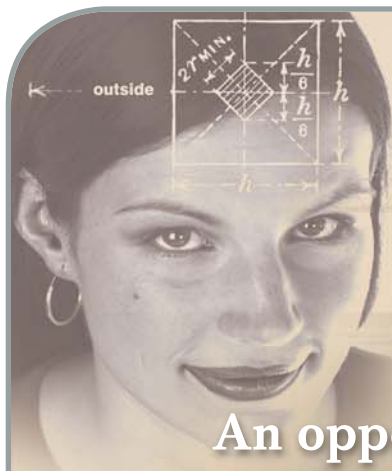
Olson explained, “Ah. And therein lies the challenge...the brand repre-

sents value(s) for people to perceive and remember about an information service or product...and for those value perceptions to be interpreted the way you intend them to be interpreted.

“Managing a brand involves coordinating marketing and communications strategies and activities in order to achieve the goals and objectives you have set for the brand—in other words, what you want people to think and remember about you and your information services.”

If establishing value(s) is a goal or objective, then the branding strategy needs to address it, measure results, and refine. A brand goal of value perceptions is complicated by the fact that different target markets have different value definitions and measures. To make it interesting, values and value measures keep evolving and morphing as they are impacted by the experiences of the people in the target market. Developing, executing and maintaining a brand strategy is not an easy, one-time task. And there is no recipe or answer that fits all.

STEPHEN MARVIN, Secretary, IFLA Academic and Research Libraries Section, President (interim), SLA China (proposed), Chair, International Relations, SLA Philadelphia, Chair, Mentoring, SLA Business and Finance.



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SLA is now accepting proposals for papers to be presented at its Annual Conference and INFO EXPO, 15-18 June 2008, in Seattle, with the theme “Breaking Rules – Building Bridges.” Accepted papers will also be published on the SLA Web site.

Every SLA member is eligible to apply. The proposals will be evaluated by a panel of SLA members in a blind review, with the strongest selected for development into full papers due 1 May 2008. In addition, this year, the paper that best demonstrates the theme of the conference will receive an award at the annual business meeting.

Topics of the papers should be related to library science, information management, research or other issues related to customer service, technology, or administration in special libraries. Proposals will be judged on their relevance to the conference theme “Breaking Rules – Building Bridges” or to the SLA tag line “Connecting People and Information,” as well on the strength of the idea, quality of writing, and potential member interest.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCEPTANCE

In addition to the quality and relevance of the proposed paper, it must meet these requirements:

- At least one author is a member of SLA.
- At least one author commits to present the paper at the annual conference.
- The proposal has been received by the deadline.
- The paper has not been published in or submitted to any other publication or conference planning group.
- The author (and any co-authors) must be willing to sign a copyright assignment that will permit SLA to use the paper in various formats.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND SPECIFICATIONS

For examples of papers from SLA's 2007 Annual Conference in Denver, see www.sla.org/content/Events/conference/ac2007/conference/papers.cfm. Full guidelines, including formatting instructions, are online at www.sla.org/seattle2008/callforpapers.

DEADLINES

14 December 2007 – Proposal due. Submit an abstract of your paper via e-mail to brandy.king@childrens.harvard.edu.

Abstracts should be 250-300 words in length, or roughly one page in 12-point text.

31 January 2008 – Notification. Twelve to 15 proposals will be chosen and all applicants will be notified of a decision.

1 May 2008 – Paper due. Authors submit their completed paper and copyright assignment to SLA.

15-18 June 2008 – Conference presentation. Authors will deliver a 15-minute presentation of their papers (along with three to four other authors) during a 90-minute Contributed Papers Session.



**We look forward to your submissions and
to hearing how you have broken rules and
built bridges in the information profession!**

Late 2007: A Few Weeks That Shook Our World

It wasn't just earthquakes and economic rumblings that stirred things up. Big changes in technology will vibrate for a long time to come.

BY STEPHEN ABRAM

Wheee! Life is a roller coaster. In the northern hemispheres—late 2006, I was traveling and managed to experience a 6.7 earthquake in Hawaii and a huge snowstorm in Buffalo. In autumn 2007, it was even more fun as I traveled for SLA as president-elect. There were two large earthquakes, scary and disastrous fires, Santa Ana winds—and all of this before returning home for the start of the Canadian winter, not exactly unknown for its epic dreariness! However, the weather reports weren't the scariest part of the news for special librarians.

The economic story was headlining the news. U.S. national debt was forecast to increase by trillions of dollars due to the high costs of war on many fronts (and this was affecting the entire global economy) along with the subprime mortgage meltdown causing the demise of several key financial leaders as well as contributing to the decline of the U.S. dollar against most world currencies. Tie this to oil heading to over \$100 a barrel, and you get the message. I am writing this column over Halloween and the papers are scarier than the costumes on the street!

For those of us who had tidily held our memories of the 80s recession in the recesses of our minds, the old fears have started to return. We remember what happened to our sector when fiscal crises at the national and international levels trickled down into publicly financed institutions and interest-rate-sensitive private-sector enterprises. It wasn't pretty. We've become quite used to a period of

continuous economic expansion for decades—by some estimates one of the most peaceful and longest expansionist economies in modern history. Is this the end of that happy time that we are witnessing—war, pandemics, depression?—emerging not with a bang but a whimper?

I hope not. But we'll see. World economic drifts are not truly within our control. We can only control our own reaction to them. The world economy is not what really frightened me as the colors of the leaves turned. No, for me, as a librarian with a passion for information, learning, and community—as well as my associations—that wasn't what scared me and caused me to rethink my view of our prospects and the window of opportunity we have for success in the new world order. I was more concerned by two weeks' worth of news that, I think and feel, may have changed the prospects of our mutual future.

Consider this, aside from the earth and the western economy shaking in late October and early November 2007, we saw:

- Google headed past 10,000 licensed traditional publishers—yes 10K! How many of us can claim to have that many current suppliers to our collections? Following Google experiments with 99 cent book rentals à la the iTunes per-song pricing model hints at a monographic business model shift from the bookstore/library model that has been stable for centuries
- Google continues to add new libraries all the time to Google BookSearch. We have already seen the transition of periodical collections in the library space to an article-level economy. Can we expect to see books disaggregated too? Are we seeing the disintegration of the non-fiction book into a chapter and paragraph level economy—potentially integrated into the article results? I believe so.
- Google announced (or it was actually leaked) its new OpenSocial development platform. Blue ribbon partners such as MySpace, Bebo, Amazon, Engage.com, Friendster, hi5, Hyves, imeem, LinkedIn, Ning, Oracle, Orkut, Plaxo, Salesforce.com, Six Apart, Tianji, Viadeo, and XING have joined Google OpenSocial—the new “open” platform for development anywhere. This creates a proprietary/open hybrid that challenges the very architecture of the Web.
- In addition, and in almost overlapping announcements, Google introduced the Open Handset Alliance, a group of mobile and technology companies committed to improving the mobile experience, and Google Android, the first truly open and comprehensive development platform for mobile devices. Wow, all phones developing to a common hybrid standard, and already they have key phone manufacturers and carriers joining Android and starting development of applications.
- Then, all in the same period and during an overall stock market drop, Google headed past \$700 a share. Someone thinks something is happening here. Internet rumors as I write this claim that Google will intro-
- Facebook getting a \$750 million equity investment from Microsoft and two equity capital firms. Valuing this social network at more than \$15 billion indicates either another Internet bubble or the migration of “smart” money into a new tier.
- Facebook introduced “social ads” in addition to its F8 development platform that allows any developer to integrate their ideas and applications into this intriguing social network space.

duce its own Google Phone as well as acquire Sprint. I suspect these are just hot rumors, but nothing is out of the range of possibility in the current shift.

- Some of these changes dwarfed the finalization of the Murdoch acquisition of Dow Jones and the Wall Street Journal. Combining Dow Jones with the largest social network, Murdoch's MySpace, certainly creates a new ecology for business information for the largest generation with disposable income, the Millennials.
- IBM announced that it is working on a portable avatar that could move between games and avatar-based worlds and applications. With its 400 developers working on Second Life alone, this could be a formidable development. IBM's acquiring Cognos was just a side story! The Gartner Group forecast a while ago that the avatar-based world would dominate Internet experiences (not just games and virtual worlds) within a decade.
- Thomson continues work in late 2007 for its major acquisition of Reuters, which would create a complete financial professional space combined with its properties aimed at law, accounting, and medicine.
- Peter Kaufman has predicted that an iPod-size device will hold one year's worth of video (8,760 hours) by 2012; all the commercial music ever created by 2015; and all the content ever created (in all media) by 2020. Gordon Moore, of Moore's Law fame, predicts that his law will end at 2020—not so much because of technology but because of need. This change will drive a new global

phase of large informational hubs on the Web and massive aggregations of content and services. What does this Internet and personal device hybrid world look like for information pros?

- And the first U.S. Boomer to hit 65 applied for her pension during this period!

or content were kings. Killer apps?! Apps no longer rule, if they ever did. Relationships do. This is an entirely new ecology. And not just the customer relationships we so lovingly tend. It's also our customers' relationships with each other and the expertise market. The playing field has expanded, and

I was more concerned by two weeks' worth of news that, I think and feel, may have changed the prospects of our mutual future.

The Progression

Most of us in SLA have lived through the various stages of the Internet. We saw the killer application—e-mail—drag our enterprises into the pre-Web Internet, and communication improved as a result. We saw the next killer app—the Web—where the content and e-commerce-based experience fundamentally changed the way we do work again. Now we are seeing the relationship-based, virtual social network emerge. And it's emerging in Facebook's F8, Google's Android, and OpenSocial, and the other search folk's developer SDK's that will cause the Web to evolve into an entirely different experience.

The technology is finally catching up with what we as information professionals value: the question, the user experience, and the one-on-one interaction with clients. Are we ready for this shift?

We are about to see the biggest transformation of the Web experience since people thought e-mail, or search,

we need to decide: "Are we ready to more clearly de-cloak our expertise and participate—with radical trust and honesty, devoid of false modesty—in the world of need?"

Either way, the Canadian dollar has soared past the U.S. dollar for the first time in decades. It's time to shop on the road again, so I just bought a new leather jacket (actually 2!). It's an ill wind that doesn't bring someone some happiness.

Strap yourself in because 2008 is going to be a fine ride. We are the stars in this new knowledge and relationship-based economy. Remember that and enjoy. **SLA**

STEPHEN ABRAM, Stephen Abram, MLS, is vice president, innovation, for SirsiDynix and the 2008 president of SLA. He is chief strategist for the SirsiDynix Institute. He is an SLA Fellow, the past president of the Ontario Library Association, and the immediate past president of the Canadian Library Association. In June 2003, he was awarded SLA's John Cotton Dana Award. He is the author of *Out Front with Stephen Abram*. This column contains his personal perspectives and does not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of SirsiDynix. You may contact him at stephen.abram@sirsidyndix.com.



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The Legal Safeguards of Ideas: The “Orphans” of IP Protection

Copyright can protect the expression of ideas, but everyone has rights to the ideas themselves.

BY LESLEY ELLEN HARRIS

It is a longstanding principle that ideas are not protected by copyright law. What copyright law protects is the *expression* of these ideas. The underlying reason for this is that ideas are part of the public domain; and therefore, no one can have a monopoly in an idea. This basic copyright principle applies no matter how novel or great an idea.

Section 102 of the U.S. *Copyright Act* states the following: “In no case does copyright protection for an original work of authorship extend to any idea, procedure, process, system, method of operation, concept, principle, or discovery, regardless of the form in which it is described, explained, illustrated, or embodied in such work.”

An 1879 U.S. court case, *Baker v. Seldon*, clearly states: “The foundation of federal copyright law is that open expressions of ideas, not the ideas themselves, give rise to protected interests.”

The leading copyright convention, the *Berne Convention*, does not specifically address the term “idea.” It merely describes works that can be protected as expressions.

Two Identical Works

Since copyright law does not protect an idea, anyone can follow an idea set out in a book or an instructional video, or create a work based on the same idea, without infringing on a copyright. Further, there can be copyright in two works expressing the same idea since it is the original expression of the idea that is protected by copy-

right. For example, two people may independently make sketches of the same mountain, each sketch being protected by copyright and neither of them violating the copyright in the other one.

In the case of an idea for a new business, the same principles apply. The idea itself would not be protected, however any “fixed” works such as a business plan, marketing documents, and Web site content, could be protected by copyright. If a competitor copied your fixed works, you may have a copyright infringement claim. However, you would not have the right to prevent someone else from using your idea for the same kind of business.

Other Areas

Along with ideas, titles, names, short slogans, history, facts, news, and similar items, are not protected by copyright law. Traditionally, ideas have been called the “orphans” of intellectual property. Ideas, *per se*, are not recognized as protectable subject matter of patents, trademarks, indus-

trial designs, topography protection, or copyright. The closest thing to protecting an idea would be through an agreement or contract that treats that idea as confidential information or as a trade secret. That is why enterprises may, in certain circumstances, ask their employees and consultants to sign a confidentiality agreement upon commencement of work with them.

For such an agreement to be valid, the information being protected must be of a confidential nature (trivial information or public information will not be protected); the information must be defined in some manner; and the information must be communicated in such a way, whether implicit or explicit, to instill an obligation of confidence.

It is always best for a confidential information arrangement to be set out in writing so that both parties adhering to it understand its terms and conditions. The agreement should describe in sufficient detail the type of information, the length of protection, if it is a limited one, any geographical limitations on divulging the information, and any allowable uses of the information. The more specific and limited the terms and conditions in the agreement, the more likely a court would uphold it. **SLA**

LESLEY ELLEN HARRIS is a copyright lawyer who works on legal, business, and strategic issues in the publishing, content, entertainment, Internet, and information industries. She is the editor of the print newsletter, *The Copyright and New Media Law Newsletter*. To receive a sample copy of this newsletter, email contact@copyright-laws.com. She also is a professor at SLA's Click University, where she teaches a number of online courses on copyright, licensing and managing copyright and digital content for SLA members. For details, see <http://www.clickuniversity.com>.



If a Company Has Women Executives, All Female Employees Can Benefit

Building a network of colleagues and mentors can be good for your career—even if you don't seek the executive suite.

BY DEBBIE SCHACHTER

The status of women leaders in business today is as much a concern for special librarians—the majority of whom are women—as for any woman working in a corporate environment. As a profession dominated by women, gender has a great deal to do with how we are perceived generally within our organizations, and how our roles are defined in business environments. Special libraries and special librarians generally have clear functions within their larger organizations, but the preconceived impression of women's abilities in the corporate environment does have an impact on our work and how we are able to contribute to the management of our organizations.

Undoubtedly, there has been a great deal of change in the roles and the perception of roles of women in business over our lifetime. The perception of a glass ceiling for women, above which they cannot rise in corporate hierarchies, still exists though, and the reality is that women are not continuing to rise in great numbers into the seats of CEOs or other executive ranks. "Despite years of progress by women in the workforce (they now occupy more than 40 percent of all managerial positions in the United States); within the C-suite they remain as rare as hens' teeth."¹

On the surface, the position of women in corporate hierarchies may be of little concern to librarians. We love our work and we know how we contribute to the success of the organization, but we may have little interest in moving upward in the corporate ranks. For others who are interested

in furthering their sphere of influence, and for those who would like to develop better skills as managers, the presence of women in senior executive positions in the organizations within which we work should be of utmost importance. Research indicates the presence of women in executive levels of organizations shows a return on equity. "Yet despite this correlation, companies don't seem to be doing enough to promote greater gender diversity at the executive level. In fact, progress in this area has essentially ground to a halt."²

From the special librarian's perspective—and in particular those of us who are women—what should the presence of women in the senior corporate hierarchy mean to us? One important indicator is the organization's perception and value of women and, in general, diversity of workforce. If diversity of staff is perceived as beneficial, special librarians will have a role in the corporate structure as one of innate contributor. Plurality of ideas and leadership styles are inherent in a diversified workforce.

Women's Networks

Second, as part of a learning profession, special librarians and library managers can benefit greatly from professional women's networks and mentorship opportunities, specifically with women in a variety of leadership roles within our own organizations. In particular, in male-dominated industries or corporations, business networks help to retain women, and women who have leadership roles

in organizations play a strong role in ensuring the diversity of thoughts and inputs of other women.

Women as leaders continues to be an area of development in the corporate environment. People are often still resistant to women in leadership roles: "Study after study has affirmed that people associate women and men with different traits and link men with more of the traits that connote leadership."³ The sense often is that women are less skilled or less innately able to lead than men. That is misinformation for which women need to take responsibility: "If women do not share their brand and identity, they will be judged by prevailing stereotypical thinking."⁴ Clearly the work that women have been doing over the past generation, and the work that professional organizations such as SLA do to develop competencies and professional standards, goes a long way to taking on the marketing of the professional and leadership skills of women.

Not everyone sees the changes in the corporate work environment for women as negative. Rather than describing the impediment to women from rising in the corporate environment as a "glass ceiling" Alice Eagly and Linda Carli prefer to use the term "labyrinth" to describe the path to senior roles: "For women who aspire to top leadership, routes exist but are full of twists and turns, both unexpected and expected. Because all labyrinths have a viable route to the center, it is understood that goals are attainable."⁵

Women still have more difficulty with work-life balance, in receiving enough support from the corporate suite to allow for time away for family responsibilities. Not only legislation but also corporate cultures that value women lead to the development of human resources policies that address these issues, helping to ensure more participation of women in leadership roles.

For the special librarian who is not

seeking a position in the corporate suite, the presence of women leaders within the organization still has an important effect. The development of formal business networks is an example of how to benefit from the increasing knowledge of women peers and leaders within our organizations. Networks can be difficult to organize and sustain, and they sometimes fail to deliver as promised due to their lack of organizational support, lack of involvement of the right individuals, or true sharing of skills. If properly initiated, however, they can provide true value to the library manager through information exchange, skill development, and problem solving with others. Organizations such as GE and Best Buy have created networks to help with women's advancement and development within their businesses, leading to more women in senior roles and better retention of valuable employees.

Networks may also provide a pool for identifying women mentors within the organization. By developing relationships through professional networks, special librarians can also identify individuals who may be able to help in your professional development particularly in management and business roles. Rather than simply being social networks, these professional types of networks can assist in practical leadership and problem solving assistance.

The reality of the "glass ceiling" or even the "labyrinth" metaphor limiting women's access to executive roles in corporate environments should be an ongoing concern to special librarians. Women peers and leaders assist us in doing a better job at what we do – as managers with business and corporate environments. In practical ways, business networks can serve to assist women to develop the leadership skills that will have a positive effect on the organization's bottom line, over time. Whether as a librarian you are interested in moving into other management or corporate roles or not, the presence of peer support networks and strong women role models within the organization will be beneficial to our careers and the percep-

DEBBIE SCHACHTER has a master's degree in library science and a master's degree in business administration. She is the associate executive director of the Jewish Family Service Agency in Vancouver, British Columbia, where she is responsible for financial management, human resources, database and IT systems, and grant application management. Schachter has more than 15 years' experience in management and supervision, technology planning and support, in a variety of nonprofit and for-profit settings. She can be reached at dschachter@jfsa.ca.



tion of our contributions overall. **SLA**

¹ Eagly, Alice H., Carli, Linda. "Women and the Labyrinth of Leadership." *Harvard Business Review*, 85(9), September 2007, p. 63.

² Pomeroy, Ann. "Cultivating Female Leaders." *HR Magazine*, 52(2), February 2007, p. 44.

³ Eagly, Alice H., Carli, Linda. "Women and the Labyrinth of Leadership." *Harvard Business Review*, 85(9), September 2007, p. 65.

⁴ Jacobs, Dianne. "Powerplay: Women, Leadership and the Getting of Power." *Ivey Business Journal*, 71(7), September/October 2007, p3.

⁵ Eagly, Alice H., Carli, Linda. "Women and the Labyrinth of Leadership." *Harvard Business Review*, 85(9), September 2007, p. 64.

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20
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MARCH

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APRIL

9
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23
Title: Electronic Collection Development, Part 2: E-library Collection Strategies, Organization, and Maintenance

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7
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12-13
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23-26
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FEBRUARY 2008

11-12
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17-24
Music Library Association Annual Meeting
Newport, Rhode Island
<http://www.trincoll.edu/mla2008/>

18-20
Special Library Conference 2008
PETRONAS and the Librarians Association of Malaysia
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

MARCH 2008

12-15
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18-21
Electronic Resources and Libraries 2008
Atlanta
www.electroniclibrarian.org/ocs/index.php/erl/2008

25-29
PLA 12th National Conference
Public Library Association
Minneapolis, MN, USA
www.placonference.org

27-28
IACRL Spring Conference 2008
Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries
Bloomington, Illinois
<http://iacrl.net/2008%20Conference/2008index.html>

APRIL 2008

1-3
IFLA International Newspaper Conference
Singapore
blogs.nlb.gov.sg/newspaper_conf08

14-16
APLIC-I 41st Annual Conference
Association for Population/Family Planning Libraries & Information Centers International
New Orleans, LA, USA
www.aplici.org/conferences/2008

16-18
Wisconsin Association of Academic Librarians Annual Conference
Manitowoc, Wisconsin USA
www.wla.lib.wi.us/waal/conferences/2008

21-22
International Copyright Symposium
Amsterdam World Book Capital Foundation
Amsterdam, Netherlands

21-24
IATUL Conference 2008
International Association of Technological University Libraries
Auckland, New Zealand
<http://www.aut.ac.nz/iatul2008/>

JUNE 15-18

SLA Annual Conference
Seattle, Washington
www.sla.org/content/Events/conference/ac2008/index.cfm

MAY 2008

16-21
2008 MLA Annual Meeting
Medical Library Association
Chicago
www.mlanet.org/am/am2008

JUNE 2008

2-7
Libraries in the Digital Age
Dubrovnik and Mljet, Croatia
www.ffos.hr/lida

5-8
NASIG 23rd Annual Conference
North American Serials Interest Group
Phoenix

12-16
10th International Conference on Enterprise Information Systems
INSTICC
Barcelona, Spain
www.iceis.org

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CCRM

CERTIFIED CONTENT RIGHTS MANAGER

The CCRM curriculum is designed to help an organization properly manage their content rights.

Topics covered in the CCRM course include:

- Understanding vital copyright law components and concepts, including the fair use defense and orphan works
- Evaluating and managing different types of content rights within licenses to help lower liability and costs
- Developing, communicating, and maintaining a content rights management plan within your organization

Who Should Attend

All professionals who purchase, manage or create content and are responsible for ensuring that it is used appropriately and that the content rights are maximized at all levels of the organization.

2007 Schedule of Cities/Dates

San Francisco, CA	November 7
Los Angeles, CA	November 8
Washington, DC	December 4
Atlanta, GA	December 13



LicenseLogic is the training company of the CCRM and consults in content rights management. In addition, LicenseLogic administers the SIIA-sponsored Certified Software Manager and Advanced Software Manager professional designations.

Software & Information
Industry Association
www.sii.net



visit www.licenselogic.com for details

Curiosity Killed the Cat, But It Will Keep You Alive!

It's your job to know things, so try to know as many things as you can—especially what's happening in your organization.

BY JOHN R. LATHAM

I enjoyed the Synergy General Session at SLA's Denver conference in June. There is something exciting about listening to leaders of one's profession answer topical questions and banter with each other. I particularly liked the answer to the question about competencies needed for information professionals where it was suggested that adaptability and curiosity will be more important than any specific, narrow technical skill.

You do not have to be a rocket scientist to work out that in this era of mind-boggling technological change, adaptability is a skill required for survival. Whether it is because of competition or new technology, companies constantly have to reinvent themselves, and the adaptable ones survive. As another year approaches, take a look at the services you offer and at how you offer them.

It is often the time of year for staff evaluations, so you have a great opportunity to discuss this very subject with your supervisor and your staff. If you have a training budget, encourage staff to select a course on a new competency rather than updating a currently used one. You will be surprised how acquiring a new skill gives a whole new perspective to what you are doing.

Being adaptable means that you embrace change. Make sure, however, that you are not just reacting to change, but initiating it. You can challenge your staff to come up with new services to offer or new ways of presenting current services. This may just be presentational by changing fonts or formats of research reports or newslet-

ters. As your services become less personal, you need to stamp the information center's brand on everything that you send out.

Think about setting up brainstorming sessions for your department once or twice a year to review current services and think about new ones. With all the pressure to meet deadlines and keep up with industry trends, it is almost impossible to find time for strategic planning.

Make sure that you are not just reacting to change, but initiating it. Challenge your staff to come up with new services to offer or new ways of presenting current services.

Curiosity should be second nature to information professionals. If a subject comes up in general conversation about which I know nothing or little, I shall not be satisfied until I can get to my laptop and find out about it. That's probably why I am known as a fund of useless information. In the workplace, curiosity can be put to good use.

Tune In

Pay attention to what is going on around you at all times. If structural work is

being done in your building, don't just complain about the noise and inconvenience, but find out why the changes are being made. If departments are being rearranged, you need to find out whether there are new services for you to offer or new staff to orient with the benefits of your services.

An internal newsletter can be a great resource for finding new customers, and finding an excuse to meet with potential customers. This may just be sending someone a link to a resource, saying that you saw that they were interested in medieval pig roasts. Sadly it is a fact that some staff do not know that they have a library or information services to use, so any form of promotion is better than none.

You should extend your curiosity to finding out what your customers do with the information that you send them. Without following up with one-off evaluation forms, or occasional surveys,

it is easy to assume that your customers continue to be satisfied with your services. Sometimes they will continue to be satisfied because they do not know that there are now alternatives. One on one chats or simple surveys can give you valuable insights into what is done with the information, and may lead to changes and improvements.

Curiosity used wisely can keep you one step ahead of the competition, and ensure your survival. **SLA**



JOHN R. LATHAM is the director of the SLA Information Center. He can be reached at jlatham@sla.org.

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